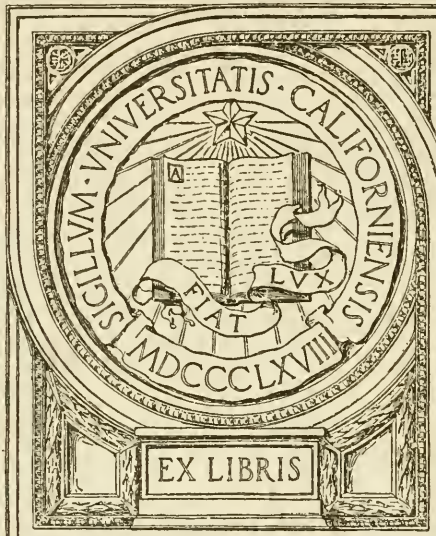
GIFT OF
MEMORIAL LIBRARY



Raeburn pinxit *J.W.Steel sculpsit*

SIR WALTER SCOTT, BARONET.

THE

POETICAL WORKS

OF

SIR WALTER SCOTT,

WITH

A SKETCH OF HIS LIFE,

BY J. W. LAKE.

Complete in one Volume.

PHILADELPHIA.

PUBLISHED BY J. CRISSY AND J. GRIGG.

STEREOTYPED BY J. C. & J. MAXWELL, JR.

1830.

9555
1830

Contents.

Page

LIFE OF SIR WALTER SCOTT..... vii

THE LAY OF THE LAST MINSTREL 1
Notes..... 25

MARMION..... 53
Notes..... 99

THE LADY OF THE LAKE..... 124
Notes..... 161

ROKEBY..... 190
Notes..... 227

THE LORD OF THE ISLES..... 250
Notes..... 285

THOMAS THE RHYMER..... 317
Notes and Appendix..... 326

HAROLD THE DAUNTLESS..... 323

THE BRIDAL OF TRIERMAIN..... 346
Notes..... 365

THE VISION OF DON RODERICK.... 367
Notes..... 375

THE FIELD OF WATERLOO..... 381
Notes..... 386

HALIDON HILL..... 387
Notes..... 399

BALLADS AND LYRICAL PIECES.

Glenfiddas; or Lord Ronald's Coronach 400
Notes..... 402
The Eve of Saint John..... 403
Notes..... 405
Cadyow Castle..... 406
Notes..... 408
The Gray Brother..... 410
Notes..... 411
The Fire King (imitated from Gœthe) 412
Frederick and Alice (imitated from Bürger)..... 413
The Wild Huntsmen..... 414
William and Helen (imitated from Bürger)..... 416
The Battle of Sempach (translated from Tchudi)..... 418
The Noble Moringer (translated from the German)..... 420

MISCELLANIES.

War-song of the Royal Edinburgh Light Dragoons..... 423
The Norman Horse-shoe..... 424
The Last Words of Cadwallon..... 424
The Maid of Toro..... 425
Hellvellyn..... 425
Jock of Hazeldean..... 425
Lullaby of an Infant Chief..... 426

Page

Pibroch of Donald Dhu..... 426
Nora's Vow..... 426
Mac-Gregor's Gathering..... 427
Donald Caird's come again..... 427
Mackrimmon's Lament..... 427
On Ettrick Forest's mountains dun..... 428
The Sun upon the Wierdlaw-hill..... 428
The Maid of Isla..... 428
The Foray..... 429
The Monks of Bangor's March..... 429
The Search after Happiness; or the Quest of Sultaun Solimaun..... 429
The Poacher..... 432
The Dance of Death..... 433
Farewell to the Muse..... 434
Epitaph on Mrs. Erskine..... 435
Mr. Kemble's Farewell Address, on taking leave of the Edinburgh Stage..... 435
Epilogue to *The Appeal*..... 435
Song—Oh say not, my love, with that mortified air..... 436
The Palmer..... 436
The Maid of Neidpath..... 436
Wandering Willie..... 436
Hunting Song—Waken, lords and ladies gay..... 437
The Violet..... 437
To a lady, with flowers from a Roman wall..... 437
The Bard's Incantation, written under the threat of invasion, in the autumn of 1804..... 437
The Resolve (in imitation of an old English poem)..... 438
Epitaph designed for a monument in Lichfield Cathedral, at the Burial Place of the Family of Miss Seward 438
The Return to Ulster..... 438
On the Massacre of Glencoe..... 439
Prologue to Miss Baillie's play of the *Family Legend*..... 439
Farewell to Mackenzie, High Chief of Kintail (from the Gaelic)..... 439
Imitation of the preceding song..... 440
War-song of Lachlan, High Chief of Maclean (from the Gaelic)..... 440
Saint Cloud (written in September, 1815) 440
Romance of Dunois (from the French) 441
The Troubadour..... 441
From the French—It chanced that Cupid on a season..... 441
Song, for the Anniversary Meeting of the Pitt Club of Scotland..... 441
Song, on the lifting of the Banner of the house of Buccleugh, at a great Foot-ball-Match on Carterhaugh..... 442
Carle, now the king's come..... 442
Impromptu, to M. Alexandre..... 443

Memoir of Sir Walter Scott.

BY J. W. LAKE.

Sir Walter Scott, descended from one of the most ancient families of Scotland—the Scotts of Harden, is the eldest surviving son of a gentleman of the same name, who was an eminent writer to the signet at Edinburgh, where the subject of this sketch was born, August 15, 1771. His mother, Mrs. Elizabeth Scott, was the daughter of David Rutherford, esq., writer to the signet, from whom she obtained a handsome fortune. She was a woman of great virtue and accomplishments, with a good taste for poetry, as appeared from some of her productions, which were deemed worthy of being printed after her death, in 1789. Walter, from the tenderness of his constitution, and the circumstance of his lameness, occasioned by a fall from his nurse's arms at two years of age, was in a great measure brought up at home, under the immediate care and instruction of this excellent parent, to whom he was much attached through life, and whose loss he sincerely lamented. Of his early pursuits little is known, except that he evinced a genius for drawing landscapes after nature.—At a proper age he was sent to the high school at Edinburgh, then directed by Dr. Alexander Adam. In this school, young Scott passed through the different forms without exhibiting any of those extraordinary powers of genius, which are seldom remembered till the person to whom they are ascribed has become, by the maturity of his talents, an object of distinction. It is said, that he was considered, in his boyhood rather heavy than otherwise, and that the late Dr. Hugh Blair had discernment enough to predict his future eminence, when the master of the school lamented his dulness; but this only affords another instance of the fallacy of human opinion in pronouncing upon the real capacity of the youthful understanding.* Barrow, the greatest scholar of his age, was discarded as a blockhead by successive teachers; and his pupil, the illustrious Newton, was declared to be fit for nothing but to drive the team, till some friends succeeded in getting him transplanted to college.

Having completed his classical studies at the high school, with as much reputation, we suppose, as others of his standing, Walter Scott was removed to the university of Edinburgh, where, also, he passed the classes in a similar manner.

His continuance here, however, could not have been long; for, after serving the prescribed terms in the office of a writer to the signet, he was admitted an advocate of the Scotch bar, when he had not quite attained the age of twenty-one.—From this time to the year 1798, his life appears to have passed in a devoted attention to his professional duties, mindful of the advice,

Not to pen stanzas when he should engross.

At the last-mentioned date he entered into the matrimonial state with Miss Carpenter, by whom he has four children. At the close of the year following, he received the appointment of sheriff-depute of the county of Selkirk; and in March, 1806, he was named one of the principal clerks of session in Scotland. With regard to this last preferment, it should be observed that his warrant, though drawn, had not passed the seals when the death of Mr. Pitt produced an entire change in the ministry. The appointment of Mr. Scott had been effected through the friendship of lord Melville, who was then actually under impeachment. This circumstance seemed very ominous against the confirmation of the nomination; but, fortunately for Mr. Scott, the new ministry consisted of such men as the late Mr. Fox, Sheridan, lord Erskine, and the marquis of Lansdowne, with several others attached to literature and philosophy; and, in a manner that did them infinite honour, they made no objection to the advancement of their poetical opponent. Thus, as a witty friend remarked, this appointment was the "last lay of the old ministry."

Released now from the drudgery of professional labour, by the acquisition of two lucrative situations, and the possession of a handsome estate through the death of his father and that of an uncle, Mr. Scott was enabled to court the muses at his pleasure, and to indulge in a variety of literary pursuits without interruption.—His first publications were translations from the German, at a time when the wildest productions of that country were much sought after in England, owing to the recent appearance of that horrible story of *Lenora* of Burger. The very year when different versions of that tale came out, and some of these highly ornamented, Mr. Scott produced two German ballads in an English dress, entitled, "The Wild Huntsman," and "William and Helen."

These little pieces, however, were not originally intended for the press, being nothing more than exercises in the way of amusement, till a friend, to whom they were shown, prevailed upon the author to publish them, and at the same time contributed the preface. Three years elapsed before Mr. Scott ventured to appear again in print, when he produced another translation from the German, "Goetz of Berlichingen," a tragedy, by Gœthe. Two years afterwards the late Matthew Gregory (commonly called Monk) Lewis, enriched his "Tales of Wonder" with two ballads communicated to him by our author, one entitled "The Eve of Saint John," and the other "Glenfinlas."

In 1802 his first great work, "The Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border," came out, beautifully printed at Kelso, by Ballantyne. This collection immediately arrested general attention, and though the pieces of which it is composed are very une-

* The prediction of Dr. Blair, here alluded to, arose out of the following circumstances. Shortly after Dr. Paterson succeeded to the grammar-school, Musselburgh, where Walter Scott was a short time a pupil, Blair, accompanied by some friends, paid him a visit; in the course of which he examined several of his pupils, and paid particular attention to young Scott. Dr. Paterson thought it was the youth's stupidity that engaged the doctor's notice, and said, "My predecessor tells me, that boy has the thickest skull in the school." "May be so," replied Dr. Blair, "but through that thick skull I can discern many bright rays of future genius."

qual, the master-mind and soaring genius of the poet are conspicuous throughout.

The studies of our author at this time were entirely antiquarian. He lived and breathed only among the knights, the heroes, the monks, and robbers of olden time; the feats of chivalry, and the rough heroism of northern warfare and border feuds, were the scenes in which his soul delighted to dwell. He drank deeply of the stream of history as it darkly flowed over the middle ages, and his spirit seemed for a time to be imbued with the mysteries, the superstitions, and the romantic valour which characterised the then chieftains of the *north countrie*.

His next production was "Sir Tristram, a metrical romance of the thirteenth century, by Thomas of Ercildoun," printed in 1804. Still, however, Mr. Scott may be said as yet to have been only rising in fame: but he soon gained enough to have intoxicated an ordinary mind in the applause bestowed upon his "Lay of the last Minstrel," which appeared, in quarto, in 1805.—The following year he published a collection of "Ballads and Lyrical Pieces." Shortly after this, public expectation was raised by the promise of a poem, on the perfection of which the bard was said to labour as for immortality. Accordingly, in 1808, appeared "Marmion, a tale of Flodden Field," which the author himself has characterised as "containing the best and the worst poetry he has ever written."

The same year Mr. Scott favoured the world with a complete edition of the Works of Dryden, in which he gave a new life of that great writer, and numerous notes. But this was not the only instance of the fecundity of his genius and the rapidity of his pen, for, while these volumes were proceeding through the press, he found time for a quarto of "Descriptions and Illustrations of the Lay of the Last Minstrel."

Within a few months after this he undertook, at the request of the booksellers, the superintendence of a new edition of lord Somers's collection of Historical Tracts; and at the same time edited sir Ralph Sadler's State Papers, and Anna Seward's Poetical Works. Yet the very year in which these last publications appeared witnessed the birth of another original offspring of his prolific muse. This was "The Lady of the Lake," the most popular of all his poems, though, in the opinion of many, inferior in several respects to his "Lay of the Last Minstrel."

"The Vision of Don Roderick" appeared in 1811, and was intended by its author to commemorate the achievements of the duke of Wellington and the British army in Spain. This poem is considered a complete failure.

"Rokeby" was published in 1812-13. It comprises, in an eminent degree, all the beauties and all the defects of our poet's muse.

In 1814 "The Lord of the Isles" appeared, but failed to excite equal interest with most of its predecessors. This is the last grand original poem of the northern bard.

In the last-mentioned year he also published a prose work, entitled, "The Border Antiquities of England and Scotland, with Descriptions and Illustrations," and brought out a new edition of Swift, with a biographical memoir and annotations.

These were followed by two performances, one in prose and the other in verse, the first entitled "Paul's Letters to his Kinsfolk," and the other "The Battle of Waterloo."

As an instance of the popularity of Scott's poems, we subjoin a statement of the sale of "Rokeby" and "The Lady of the Lake," in nearly four months, as submitted by the publishers.

Sold of "The Lady of the Lake," from June 2d to September 22, 1810,

2,000 quarto, at 2*l.* 2*s*.	4,200*l.*
6,000 octavo, at 12*s*.	3,600*l.*
8,000	7,800*l.*

Sold of "Rokeby," in three months (Jan. 14th to April 14th, 1813,)

3,000 quarto, at 2*l.* 2*s*. (less 120 remaining).	6,048*l.*
5,000 octavo, at 14*s*.	3,500*l.*
8,000	9,548*l.*

We shall now attempt to offer a few critical observations on the three most deservedly popular poems of Walter Scott, viz. The Lay of the Last Minstrel, Marmion, and The Lady of the Lake.

The Lay of the Last Minstrel is an endeavour to transfer the refinements of modern poetry to the matter and the manner of the ancient metrical romance. The author, enamoured of the lofty visions of chivalry, and partial to the strains in which they were formerly embodied, employed all the resources of his genius in endeavouring to recal them to the favour and admiration of the public, and in adapting to the taste of modern readers a species of poetry, which was once the delight of the courtly, but which has long ceased to gladden any other eyes than those of the scholar and the antiquary. This is a romance, therefore, composed by a minstrel of the present day, or such a romance as we may suppose would have been written in modern times, if that style of composition had been cultivated, and partaken, consequently, of the improvements which every branch of literature has received since the time of its desertion.

Upon this supposition, it was evidently the author's business to retain all that was good, and to reject all that was bad, in the models upon which he was to form himself; adding, at the same time, all the interest and beauty which could possibly be assimilated to the manner and spirit of his original. It was his duty, therefore, to reform the rambling, obscure, and interminable narratives of the ancient romancers,—to moderate their digressions,—to abridge or retrench their prolix or needless descriptions,—and to expunge altogether those feeble and prosaic passages, the rude stupidity of which is so apt to excite the derision of a modern reader: at the same time he was to rival, if he could, the force and vivacity of their minute and varied representations—the characteristic simplicity of their pictures of manners—the energy and conciseness with which they frequently describe great events—and the lively colouring and accurate drawing by which they give the effect of reality to every scene they undertake to delineate. In executing this arduous task, he was permitted to avail himself of all the variety of style and manner which had been sanctioned by the ancient practice, and bound to embellish his performance with all the graces of diction, and versification which could be reconciled to the simplicity and familiarity of the minstrel's song.

The success which attended Mr. Scott's efforts in the execution of this adventurous essay is well known;—he produced a very beautiful and enter-

taining poem, in a style which might fairly be considered as original, and the public approbation afforded the most flattering evidence of the genius of the author. Perhaps, indeed, his partiality for the strains of antiquity imposed a little upon the severity of his judgment, and impaired the beauty of his imitation, by directing his attention rather to what was characteristic, than to what was unexceptionable in his originals. Though he spared too many of their faults, however, he improved upon their beauties, and while it was regretted by many, that the feuds of border chieftains should have monopolized as much poetry as might have served to immortalize the whole baronage of the empire, yet it produced a stronger inclination to admire the interest and magnificence which he contrived to communicate to a subject so unpromising.

Marmion has more tedious and flat passages, and more ostentation of historical and antiquarian lore, than its predecessor, but it has also greater richness and variety, both of character and incident; and, if it has less sweetness and pathos in the softer passages, it has certainly more vehemence and force of colouring in the loftier and busier representations of action and emotion. The place of the prologuizing minstrel is but ill supplied, indeed, by the epistolary dissertations which are prefixed to each book of this poem; but there is more airiness and spirit in the lighter delineations, and the story, if not more skilfully conducted, is at least better complicated, and extended through a wider field of adventure. The characteristics of both, however, are evidently the same;—a broken narrative—a redundancy of minute description—bursts of unequal and energetic poetry—and a general tone of spirit and animation, unchecked by timidity or affectation, and unchastened by any great delicacy of taste, or elegance of fancy.

The Lady of the Lake is more polished in its diction, and more regular in its versification, than the author's preceding poems; the story is constructed with infinitely more skill and address; there is a greater proportion of pleasing and tender passages, with much less antiquarian detail, and, upon the whole, a larger variety of characters, more artfully and judiciously contrasted. There is nothing so fine, perhaps, as the battle in Marmion, or so picturesque as some of the scattered sketches in the Lay of the Last Minstrel; but there is a richness and a spirit in the Lady of the Lake, which does not pervade either of these poems; a profusion of incident, and a shifting brilliancy of colouring, that reminds us of the witchery of Ariosto, and a constant elasticity and occasional energy, which seem to belong more peculiarly to the author himself.

At this period Mr. Scott had outstripped all his poetical competitors in the race of popularity. The mighty star of Byron had not yet risen; and we doubt whether any British poet had ever had so many of his books sold, or so many of his verses read and admired by such a multitude of persons in so short a time as Walter Scott. Confident in the force and originality of his own genius, he was not afraid to avail himself of diction and of sentiment, wherever they appeared to be beautiful and impressive, using them, however, at all times, with the skill and spirit of an inventor; and, quite certain that he could not be mistaken for a plagiarist or imitator, he made free use of that great treasury of characters, images, and expressions, which had been accumulated by the most celebrated of his predecessors; at the same time that the rapidity of his transitions, the novelty of his combinations, and the spirit and variety of his own thoughts and inventions, show plainly that he was a borrower from any thing but poverty, and took only what he could have given if he had been born in an earlier age. The great secret of his popularity at the time, and the leading characteristic of his poetry, consisted evidently in this, that he made use of more common topics, images, and expressions, than any original poet of later times; and, at the same time, displayed more genius and originality than any recent author who had hitherto worked in the same materials. By the latter peculiarity, he entitled himself to the admiration of every description of readers; by the former he came recommended in an especial manner to the inexperienced, at the hazard of some little offence to the more cultivated and fastidious.

In the choice of his subjects, for example, he did not attempt to interest merely by fine observations or pathetic sentiment, but took the assistance of a story, and enlisted the reader's curiosity among his motives for attention. Then his characters were all selected from the most common *dramatis personæ* of poetry—kings, warriors, knights, outlaws, nuns, minstrels, secluded damsels, wizards, and true lovers. He never ventured to carry us into the cottage of the peasant, like Crabbe or Cowper; nor into the bosom of domestic privacy, like Campbell; nor among creatures of the imagination, like Southey or Darwin. Such personages, assuredly, are not in themselves so interesting or striking as those to which our poet devoted himself; but they are far less familiar in poetry, and are therefore more likely to engage the attention of those to whom poetry is familiar. In the management of the passions, again, he pursued the same popular and comparatively easy course. He raised all the most familiar and poetical emotions, by the most obvious aggravations, and in the most compendious and judicious way. He dazzled the reader with the splendour, and even warmed him with the transient heat of various affections: but he nowhere fairly kindled him into enthusiasm, or melted him into tenderness. Writing for the world at large, (unlike Byron,) he wisely abstained from attempting to raise any passion to a height to which worldly people could not be transported, and contented himself with giving his reader the chance of feeling as a brave, kind, and affectionate gentleman should often feel in the ordinary course of his existence, without trying to breathe into him either that lofty enthusiasm which disdains the ordinary business and amusements of life, or that quiet and deep sensibility, which unfits for all its pursuits. With regard to diction and imagery, too, it is quite obvious that he aimed not at writing in either a pure or very common style. He seems to have been anxious only to strike, and to be easily and universally understood; and, for this purpose, to have culled the most glittering and conspicuous expressions of the most popular authors, and to have interwoven them in splendid confusion with his own nervous diction and irregular versification. Indifferent whether he coins or borrows, and drawing with equal freedom on his memory and his imagination, he went boldly forward, in full reliance on a never failing abundance, and dazzled, with his richness and variety, even those who are most apt to be offended with his

glare and irregularity. There is nothing in Scott's poetry of the severe and majestic style of Milton—or of the terse and fine composition of Pope—or of the elaborate elegance and melody of Campbell—or even of the flowing and redundant diction of Southey; but there is a medley of bright images and glowing words, set carelessly and loosely together—a diction tinged successively with the careless richness of Shakspeare, the harshness and antique simplicity of the old romances, the homeliness of vulgar ballads and anecdotes, and the sentimental glitter of the most modern poetry—passing from the borders of the ludicrous to those of the sublime—alternately minute and energetic—sometimes artificial, and frequently negligent, but always full of spirit and vivacity—abounding in images that are striking, at first sight, to minds of every contexture—and never expressing a sentiment which it can cost the most ordinary reader any exertion to comprehend.

Among the peculiarities of Scott, as a poet, we might notice his singular talent for description, and especially for that of scenes abounding in motion or action of any kind. In this department, indeed, he may be considered almost without a rival, either among modern or ancient bards; and the character and process of his descriptions are as extraordinary as their effect is astonishing. He places before the eyes of his readers a more distinct and complete picture, perhaps, than any other artist ever presented by mere words; and yet he does not enumerate all the visible parts of the subject with any degree of minuteness, nor confine himself by any means to what is visible. The singular merit of his delineations, on the contrary, consists in this, that, with a few bold and abrupt strokes, he sketches a most spirited outline, and then instantly kindles it by the sudden light and colour of some moral affection. There are none of his fine descriptions, accordingly, which do not derive a great part of their clearness and picturesque effect, as well as their interest, from the quantity of character and moral expression which is thus blended with their details, and which, so far from interrupting the conception of the external object, very powerfully stimulate the fancy of the reader to complete it; and give a grace and a spirit to the whole representation, of which we do not know where to look for a similar example. Walter Scott has many other characteristic excellencies, but we must not detain our readers any longer with this imperfect sketch of his poetical character.

To the list of poetical works given above, we have here to add two poems, at first published anonymously, but since acknowledged, viz. "The Bridal of Triermain," and "Harold the Dauntless;" and, in 1822, a dramatic sketch called "Halidon Hill." In his preface to the latter, the poet says, that his dramatic sketch is in no particular designed or calculated for the stage, and that any attempt to produce it in action will be at the peril of those who make the experiment. The truth is that, like most of the higher poetical spirits of the age, he has found out a far safer and surer way to equitable judgments and fame, than trusting to the hazardous presentment of the characters he draws, by the heroes of the sock and buskin, and to the dubious and captious shouts of the pit and gallery.

That Halidon Hill is a native, heroic, and chivalrous drama—clear, brief, and moving in its story—full of pictures, living and breathing, and impressed with the stamp of romantic and peculiar times, and expressed in language rich and felicitous, must be felt by the most obtuse intellect; yet we are not sure that its success would be great on the stage, if for the stage it had ever been designed. The beauties by which it charms and enchains attention in the closet—those bright and innumerable glimpses of past times—those frequent allusions to ancient deeds and departed heroes—the action of speech rather than of body, would be lost in the vast London theatres, where a play is wanted, adapted to the eye rather than to the head or heart. The time of action equals, it is true, the wishes of the most limited critic; the place, too, the foot of Halidon, and its barren ascent, cannot be much more ample than the space from the further side of the stage to the upper regions of the gallery; and the heroes who are called forth to triumph and to die are native flesh and blood, who yet live in their descendants. It has all the claims which a dramatic poem can well have on a British audience; yet we always hoped it would escape the clutches of those who cut up quantities for the theatres.

The transfer which the poet has avowedly made of the incidents of the battle of Homildon to the Hill of Halidon, seems such a violation of authentic history, as the remarkable similarity of those two disastrous battles can never excuse. It is dangerous to attempt this violent shifting of heroic deeds. The field of Bannockburn would never tell of any other victory than the one which has rendered it renowned: History lifts up her voice against it; nor can the Hill of Homildon tell the story of the Hill of Halidon, nor that of any other battle but its own.

It will scarcely be expected that, in this rapid sketch, we should enter into a respective analysis of those works, so well known, and so universally admired, by the appellation of the "Waverley Novels." The painful circumstances which compelled their author to disclose himself are still fresh in the recollection and the sympathy of the public: the motives, or no motives, which induced him so long and so pertinaciously to abstain from avowing himself, it is not our province to criticise, nor do we wish to make a boast of having always believed what could scarcely be ever doubted, viz. that the Great Unknown and the author of Marmion were "one and indivisible."

The annexed is a list of the novels in question, produced by this great author in the space of only twelve years.

Waverley	1814
Guy Mannering	1815
The Antiquary	1816
Tales of My Landlord,	
First Series	1816
Second Series	1818
Third Series	1819
Rob Roy	1818
Ivanhoe	1820
The Monastery	1820
The Abbot	1820
Kenilworth	1821
The Pirate	1822
The Fortunes of Nigel	1822
Quentin Durward	1823
Peveril of the Peak	1823
St. Ronan's Well	1824
Redgauntlet	1824

Tales of the Crusaders . .	1825
Woodstock	1826

It may, then, be fearlessly asserted that, since the time when Shakspeare wrote his thirty-eight plays in the brief space of his early manhood, there has been no such prodigy of literary fertility as the author of these novels. In a few brief years, he has founded a new school of invention, and embellished and endowed it with volumes of the most animated and original composition that have enriched British literature for a century—volumes that have cast into the shade all contemporary prose, and, by their force of colouring and depth of feeling, by their variety, vivacity, magical facility, and living presentment of character, have rendered conceivable to this later age the miracles of the mighty dramatist. Shakspeare is, undoubtedly, more purely original, but it must be remembered that, in his time, there was much less to borrow—and that he too has drawn freely and largely from the sources that were open to him, at least for his fable and graver sentiment; for his wit and humour, as well as his poetry, are always his own. In our times, all the higher walks of literature have been so long and so often trodden, that it is scarcely possible to keep out of the footsteps of some of our precursors; and the ancients, it is well known, have anticipated all our bright thoughts, and not only visibly beset all the obvious approaches to glory, but swarm in such ambushed multitudes behind, that when we think we have gone fairly beyond their plagiarisms, and honestly worked out an original excellence of our own, up starts some deep-read antiquary, and makes out, much to his own satisfaction, that, heaven knows how, many of these busy-bodies have been beforehand with us, both in the *genus* and the species of our invention.

Although sir Walter Scott is certainly in less danger from such detections than any other we have ever met with, even in him the traces of imitation are obvious and abundant; and it is impossible, therefore, to give him the same credit for absolute originality as those earlier writers, who, having no successful author to imitate, were obliged to copy directly from nature. In naming him along with Shakspeare, we mean still less to say, that he is to be put on a level with him, as to the richness and sweetness of his fancy, or that living vein of pure and lofty poetry which flows with such abundance through every part of his composition. On that level no other writer has ever stood, or will ever stand; though we do think that there are fancy and poetry enough in the Waverley Novels, if not to justify the comparison we have ventured to suggest, at least to save it from being altogether ridiculous. The variety stands out in the face of each of them, and the facility is attested, as in the case of Shakspeare himself, both by the inimitable freedom and happy carelessness of the style in which they are executed, and by the matchless rapidity with which they have been lavished on the public.

We must now, however, for the sake of keeping our chronology in order, be permitted to say a word or two on the most popular of these works.

The earlier novelists wrote at periods when society was not perfectly formed, and we find that their picture of life was an embodying of their own conceptions of the beau ideal. Heroes all generosity, and ladies all chastity, exalted above the vulgarities of society and nature, maintain, through eternal folios, their visionary virtues, without the stain of any moral frailty, or the degradation of any human necessities. But this high-flown style went out of fashion as the great mass of mankind became more informed of each other's feelings and concerns, and as nearer observation taught them that the real course of human life is a conflict of duty and desire, of virtue and passion, of right and wrong: in the description of which it is difficult to say whether uniform virtue, or unredeemed vice, would be in the greater degree tedious and absurd.

The novelists next endeavoured to exhibit a general view of society. The characters in Gil Blas and Tom Jones are not individuals so much as specimens of the human race; and these delightful works have been, are, and ever will be, popular; because they present lively and accurate delineations of the workings of the human soul, and that every man who reads them is obliged to confess to himself, that, in similar circumstances with the personages of Le Sage and Fielding, he would probably have acted in the way in which they are described to have done.

From this species the transition to a third was natural. The first class was theory—it was improved into a genuine description, and that again led the way to a more particular classification—a copying not of man in general, but of men of a peculiar nation, profession, or temper, or to go a step further—of individuals.

Thus Alexander and Cyrus could never have existed in human society—they are neither French, nor English, nor Italian, because it is only allegorically that they are men. Tom Jones might have been a Frenchman, and Gil Blas an Englishman, because the essence of their characters in human nature, and the personal situation of the individual, are almost indifferent to the success of the object which the author proposed to himself; while, on the other hand, the characters of the most popular novels of later times are Irish, or Scotch, or French, and not, in the abstract, men.—The general operations of nature are circumscribed to her effects on an individual character, and the modern novels of this class, compared with the broad and noble style of the earlier writers, may be considered as Dutch pictures, delightful in their vivid and minute details of common life, wonderfully entertaining to the close observer of peculiarities, and highly creditable to the accuracy, observation, and humour of the painter, but exciting none of those more exalted feelings, and giving none of those higher views of the human soul, which delight and exalt the mind of the spectator of Raphael, Corregio, or Murillo.

The object of Waverley was evidently to present a faithful and animated picture of the manners and state of society that prevailed in the northern part of the island in the earlier part of last century; and the author judiciously fixed upon the era of the Rebellion in 1745, not only as enriching his pages with the interest inseparably attached to the narration of such occurrences, but as affording a fair opportunity for bringing out all the contrasted principles and habits which distinguished the different classes of persons who then divided the country, and formed among themselves the basis of almost all that was peculiar in the national character. That unfortunate contention brought conspicuously to light, and for the last

time, the fading image of feudal chivalry in the mountains, and vulgar fanaticism in the plains; and startled the more polished parts of the land with the wild but brilliant picture of the elevated valour, incorruptible fidelity, patriarchal brotherhood, and savage habits, of the Celtic clans on the one hand,—and the dark, untractable, and domineering bigotry of the covenanters on the other. Both forms of society had indeed been prevalent in the other parts of the country, but had there been so long superseded by more peaceable habits, and milder manners, that their vestiges were almost effaced, and their very memory nearly forgotten.

The feudal principalities had been extinguished in the South for near three hundred years, and the dominion of the puritans from the time of the Restoration. When the glens of the central highlands, therefore, were opened up to the gaze of the English, it seemed as if they were carried back to the days of the Heptarchy: when they saw the array of the West Country whigs, they might imagine themselves transported to the age of Cromwell. The effect, indeed, is almost as startling at the present moment; and one great source of the interest which the novel of Waverley possesses is to be sought in the surprise that is excited by discovering, that in our own country, and almost in our own age, manners and characters existed, and were conspicuous, which we had been accustomed to consider as belonging to remote antiquity, or extravagant romance.

The way in which they are here represented must at once have satisfied every reader, by an internal *tact* and conviction, that the delineation had been made from actual experience and observation;—experienced observation employed perhaps only on a few surviving relics and specimens of what was familiar a little earlier, but generalized from instances sufficiently numerous and complete, to warrant all that may have been added to the portrait.

The great traits of clannish dependence, pride, and fidelity, may still be detected in many districts of the highlands, though they do not now adhere to the chieftains when they mingle in general society; and the existing contentions of burghers and antiburghers, and cameronians, though shrunk into comparative insignificance, and left indeed without protection to the ridicule of the profane, may still be referred to as complete verifications of all that is here stated about Gifted Gilfillan, or Ebenezer Cruickshanks. The traits of Scottish national character in the lower ranks can still less be regarded as antiquated or traditional; nor is there any thing in the whole compass of the work which gives us a stronger impression of the nice observation and graphical talents of sir Walter, than the extraordinary fidelity and felicity with which all the inferior agents in the story are represented. No one who has not lived long among the lower orders of all descriptions, and made himself familiar with their various tempers and dialects, can perceive the full merit of those rapid and characteristic sketches; but it requires only a general knowledge of human nature, to feel that they must be faithful copies from known originals; and to be aware of the extraordinary facility and flexibility of hand which has touched, for instance, with such discriminating shades, the various gradations of the Celtic character, from the savage imperturbability of Dugald Mahony, who stalks grimly about with his battle-axe on his shoulder, without speaking a word to any body, to the lively unprincipled activity of Callum Beg, the coarse unreflecting hardihood and heroism of Evan Maccombich, and the pride, gallantry, elegance, and ambition of Fergus himself. In the lower class of the lowland characters, again, the vulgarity of Mrs. Flockhart and of Lieutenant Jinker is perfectly distinct and original, as well as the puritanism of Gilfillan and Cruickshanks, the depravity of Mrs. Mucklewrath, and the slow solemnity of Alexander Saunderson. The baron of Bradwardine, and Baillie Macwheeble, are caricatures no doubt, after the fashion of the caricatures in the novels of Smollett,—unique and extraordinary; but almost all the other personages in the history are fair representations of classes that are still existing, or may be remembered at least to have existed, by many whose recollections do not extend quite so far back as the year 1745.

The successful reception of Waverley was owing not only to the author's being a man of genius, but that he had also *virtue* enough to be true to nature throughout, and to content himself, even in the marvellous parts of his story, with copying from actual existences, rather than from the phantasms of his own imagination. The charm which this communicates to all works that deal in the representation of human actions and characters is more readily felt than understood, and operates with unfailing efficacy even upon those who have no acquaintance with the originals from which the picture has been borrowed. It requires no ordinary talent, indeed, to choose such realities as may outshine the bright imaginations of the inventive, and so to combine them as to produce the most advantageous effect; but when this is once accomplished, the result is sure to be something more firm, impressive, and engaging, than can ever be produced by mere fiction. There is a consistency in nature and truth, the want of which may always be detected in the happiest combinations of fancy; and the consciousness of their support gives a confidence and assurance to the artist, which encourages him occasionally to risk a strength of colouring, and a boldness of touch, upon which he would scarcely have ventured in a sketch that was purely ideal. The reader, too, who by these or still finer indications, speedily comes to perceive that he is engaged with scenes and characters that are copied from existing originals, naturally lends a more eager attention to the story in which they are unfolded, and regards with a keener interest what he no longer considers as a bewildering series of dreams and exaggerations, but as an instructive exposition of human actions and energies, and of all the singular modifications which our plastic nature receives from the circumstances with which it is surrounded.

Although Guy Mannering is a production far below Waverley, it is still a work of considerable merit. Its interiority to Waverley is, however, very decided, not only as to general effect, but in every individual topic of interest. The story is less probable, and is carried on with much machinery and effort; the incidents are less natural; the characters are less distinctly painted, and less worth painting; in short, the whole tone of the book is pitched in an inferior key.

The gratuitous introduction of supernatural agency in some parts of this novel is certainly to

be disapproved of. Even Shakspeare, who has been called the mighty magician, was never guilty of this mistake. His magic was employed in fairy-land, as in the Tempest; and his ghosts and goblins in dark ages, as in Macbeth and Hamlet. When he introduces a witch in Henry VI, it is because, historically, his representation was true; when he exhibits the perturbed dreams of a murderer, in Richard III, it was because his representation was morally probable; but he never thought of making these fancies actual agents in an historical scene. There are no ghosts in Henry VIII, and no witches in the Merry Wives of Windsor (except the merry ladies;) and when, in one of his comedies, he chooses to wander out of nature, he m destly calls his drama a dream, and mixes up fairies, witches, mythology, and common life, as a brilliant extravaganza, which affects no historical nor even possible truth, and which pretends to represent neither actual nor possible nature. Not so Guy Mannering: it brings down witchery and supernatural agency into our own times, not to be laughed at by the better informed, or credited by the vulgar; but as an active, effective, and real part of his machinery. It treats the supernatural agency not as a superstition, but as a truth; and the result is brought about, not by the imaginations of men deluded by a fiction, but by the actual operation of a miracle, contrary to the opinion and belief of all the parties concerned.

The ANTIQUARY is not free from this blame; there are two or three marvellous dreams and apparitions, upon which the author probably intended to ground some important parts of his *denouement;* but his taste luckily took fright: the apparitions do not contribute to the catastrophe, and they now appear in the work as marks rather of the author's own predilection to such agency, than as any assistance to him in the way of machinery.

The HEART OF MID-LOTHIAN, is remarkable for containing fewer characters, and less variety of incident, than any of sir Walter's former productions:—and it is accordingly, in some places, comparatively languid. The Porteous mob is rather heavily described; and the whole part of George Robertson, or Staunton, is extravagant or unpleasing. The final catastrophe, too, is needlessly improbable and startling; and both Saddletree and Davie Deans, become at last rather tedious and unreasonable; while we miss, throughout, the character of the generous and kind-hearted rustic, which in one form or another, gives such spirit and interest to the former stories. But with all these defects, the work has both beauty and power enough to vindicate its title to a legitimate descent from its mighty father—and even to a place in "the valued file" of his productions. The trial and condemnation of Effie Deans are pathetic and beautiful in the very highest degree; and the scenes with the duke of Argyle are equally full of spirit; and strangely compounded of perfect knowledge of life, and strong and deep feeling. But the great boast of the piece, and the great exploit of the author, is the character and history of Jeanie Deans, from the time she first reproves her sister's flirtations at St. Leonard's till she settles in the manse in Argyleshire. The singular talent with which he has engrafted on the humble and somewhat coarse stock of a quiet and unassuming peasant girl, the powerful affection, the strong sense, and lofty purposes, which distinguish the heroine—or rather the art with which he has so tempered and modified those great qualities, as to make them appear nowise unsuitable to the station or ordinary bearing of such a person, and so ordered and disposed the incidents by which they are called out, that they seem throughout adapted, and native, as it were, to her condition, is superior to any thing we can recollect in the history of invention; and must appear to any one, who attentively considers it, as a remarkable triumph over the greatest of all difficulties, in the conduct of a fictitious narrative. Jeanie Deans, in the course of her adventurous undertaking, excites our admiration and sympathy more powerfully than most heroines, and is in the highest degree both pathetic and sublime;—and yet she never says or does any thing that the daughter of a Scotch cow-feeder might not be supposed to say or to do—and scarcely any thing indeed that is not characteristic of her rank and habitual occupations. She is never sentimental, nor refined, nor elegant; and though always acting in very difficult situations, with the greatest judgment and propriety, never seems to exert more than that downright and obvious good sense, which is so often found to rule the conduct of persons of her condition. This is the great ornament and charm of the work. Dumbiedikes is, however, an admirable sketch in the grotesque way;—and the captain of Knockdunder is not only a very spirited, but also a very accurate representation of a Celtic deputy. There is less description of scenery, and less sympathy in external nature in this, than in any of the other tales.

The BRIDE OF LAMMERMOOR is more sketchy and romantic than the *usual vein* of the author—and loses, perhaps, in the exaggeration that is incident to the style, some of the deep and heart-felt interest that belongs to more familiar situations. The humours of Caleb Balderstone are, to our taste, the least successful of this author's attempts at pleasantry,—and belong rather to the school of French or Italian buffoonery, than to that of English humour;—and yet, to give scope to these farcical exhibitions, the poverty of the master of Ravenswood is exaggerated beyond all credibility, and to the injury even of his personal dignity. Sir William Ashton is tedious; and Bucklaw and his captain, though excellently drawn, take up rather too much room for subordinate agents. There are splendid things, however, in this work also. The picture of old Ailie is exquisite—and beyond the reach of any other living writer. The hags that convene in the church-yard have all the terror and sublimity, and more than the nature of Macbeth's witches; and the courtship at the Mermaiden's well, as well as some of the immediately preceding scenes, are full of dignity and beauty. The catastrophe of the bride, though it may be founded on fact, is too horrible for fiction. But that of Ravenswood is magnificent---and, taken along with the prediction which it was doomed to fulfil, and the mourning and death of Balderstone, is one of the finest combinations of superstition and sadness, which the gloomy genius of our fiction ever put together.

The LEGEND OF MONTROSE is also of the nature of a sketch or fragment, and is still more vigorous than its companion. There is too much, perhaps, of Dalgetty---or, rather, he engrosses too great a proportion of the work; for, in himself, we think he is uniformly entertaining;---and the

author has nowhere shown more affinity to that matchless spirit, who could bring out his Falstaffs and his Pistols, in act after act, and play after play, and exercise them every time with scenes of unbounded loquacity, without either exhausting their humour, or varying a note from its characteristic tone, than in his ample and reiterated specimens of the eloquence of the redoubted Rittmaster. The general idea of the character is familiar to our comic dramatists after the restoration—and may be said, in some measure, to be compounded of captain Fluellen and Bobadil;—but the ludicrous combination of the *soldado* with the student of Mareschal College is entirely original; and the mixture of talent, selfishness, courage, coarseness, and conceit, was never so happily exemplified. Numerous as his speeches are, there is not one that is not characteristic—and, to our taste, divertingly ludicrous. Annot Lyle, and the Children of the Mist, are in a very different manner, and are full of genius and poetry. The whole of the scenes at Argyle's castle, and in the escape from it—though trespassing too far beyond the bounds of probability—are given with great spirit and effect; and the mixture of romantic incident and situation, with the tone of actual business, and the real transactions of a camp, give a life and interest to the warlike part of the story, which belong to the fictions of no other hand.

From the Tales of My Landlord we must pass rapidly over to the beautiful romance of IVANHOE, the story of which is entirely English, and the time laid as far back as the reign of Richard I, the Saxons and Normans of which age are less known to us than the highlanders and cameronians of the present. This was the great difficulty the author had to contend with, and the great disadvantage of the subject with which he had to deal. Nobody now alive can have a very clear conception of the actual way of life, and *manière d'être* of our ancestors in the year 1194. Some of the more prominent outlines of their chivalry, their priesthood, and their villanage, may be known to antiquaries, or even to general readers; but all the filling up and details, which alone can give body and life to the picture, have been long since effaced by time. We have scarcely any notion, in short, of the private life and conversation of any class of persons in that remote period; and, in fact, know less how the men and women occupied and amused themselves—what they talked about—how they looked—or what they actually thought or felt, at that time in England, than we know of what they did or thought at Rome in the time of Augustus, or at Athens in the time of Pericles. The memorials and relics of those earlier ages and remoter nations are greatly more abundant and more familiar to us, than those of our ancestors at the distance of seven centuries. Besides ample histories and copious orations, we have plays, poems, and familiar letters of the former period; while of the latter we have only some vague chronicles, superstitious legends, and a few fragments of foreign romance. We scarcely know indeed what language was then either spoken or written. Yet, with all these helps, how cold and conjectural a thing would a novel be, of which the scene was laid in ancient Rome! The author might talk with perfect propriety of the beauties of the Forum, and the arrangements of the circus—of the baths and the suppers, and the canvass for office, and the sacrifices, and musters, and assemblies. He might be quite correct as to the dress, furniture, and utensils he had occasion to mention; and might even embody in his work various anecdotes and sayings preserved in contemporary authors. But when he came to represent the details of individual character and feeling, and to delineate the daily conduct, and report the ordinary conversation of his persons, he would find himself either frozen in among barren generalities, or engaged with modern Englishmen in the masquerade habits of antiquity.

In stating these difficulties, however, we really mean less to account for the defects, than to enhance the merits of the work we are treating of. For though the author has not worked impossibilities, he has done wonders with his subject; and though we do sometimes miss those fresh and living pictures of the characters which we know, and the nature with which we are familiar, and that high and deep interest which the home scenes of our own times and own people, could alone generate or sustain, it is impossible to deny that he has made marvellous good use of the scanty materials he had at his disposal, and eked them out both by the greatest skill and dexterity in their arrangement, and by all the resources that original genius could render subservient to such a design. For this purpose he has laid his scene in a period when the rivalry of the victorious Normans and the conquered Saxons had not been finally composed; and when the courtly petulance and chivalrous and military pride of the one race might yet be set in splendid opposition to the manly steadiness and honest but homely simplicity of the other; and has, at the same time, given an air both of dignity and reality to his story, by bringing in the personal prowess of Cœur de Lion himself, and other personages of historical fame, to assist in its development. Though reduced in a great measure to the vulgar staple of armed knights, and jolly friars and woodmen, imprisoned damsels, lawless barons, collared serfs, and household fools, he has made such use of his great talents for description, and invested those traditional and theatrical persons with so much of the feelings that are of all ages and all countries, that we frequently cease to regard them (as it is generally right to regard them) as parts of a fantastical pageant, and are often brought to consider the knights who joust in panoply in the lists, and the foresters who shoot deer with arrows, and plunder travellers in the woods, as real individuals, with hearts and blood beating in their bosoms like our own—actual existences, in short, into whose views we may reasonably enter, and with whose emotions we are bound to sympathise. To all this he has added, out of the prodigality of his high and inventive genius, the grace and the interest of some lofty, and sweet, and superhuman characters, for which, though evidently fictitious, and unnatural in any stage of society, the remoteness of the scene on which they are introduced may serve as an apology, if they could need any other than what they bring along with them in their own sublimity and beauty.

In comparing this work then with the productions which had already proceeded from the same master-hand, it is impossible not to feel that we are passing in some degree from the reign of nature and reality to that of fancy and romance, and exchanging for scenes of wonder and curiosity those more homefelt sympathies, and deeper

touches of delight, that can only be excited by the people among whom we live, and the objects that are constantly around us. A far greater proportion of the work is accordingly made up of splendid descriptions of arms and dresses, moated and massive castles, tournaments of mailed champions, solemn feasts, formal courtesies, and other matters of external and visible presentment, that are only entitled to such distinction as connected with the olden times, and novel by virtue of their antiquity; while the interest of the story is maintained far more by surprising adventures and extraordinary situations, the startling effect of exaggerated sentiments, and the strong contrast of overdrawn characters, than by the sober charms of truth and reality, the exquisite representation of scenes with which we are familiar, or the skilful development of affections which we have often experienced.

These bright lights and deep shadows—this succession of brilliant pictures, addressed as often to the eyes as to the imagination, and oftener to the imagination than the heart—this preference of striking generalities to homely details, all belong more properly to the province of poetry than of prose; and Ivanhoe, accordingly, seems to us much more akin to the most splendid of modern poems, than the most interesting of modern novels; and savours much more of the author of Marmion, or the Lady of the Lake, than of Waverley or Old Mortality.

Without disputing the general verdict, which places the MONASTERY below the rest of our author's works, we shall endeavour to ascertain the grounds on which it may be supposed to be founded. We believe the principal deficiency lies in, what is usually our author's principal excellence, the female characters. In general, his men add to the boldness and animation of the scene, but his women support almost all its interest. Perhaps this must always be the case where both are equally well drawn. We sympathize more readily with simple than with compound feelings; and therefore less easily with those characters, the different ingredients of which have, by mutual subservience, been moulded into one uniform mass, than with those in which they stand unmixed and contrasted. Courage restrained by caution, and liberality by prudence, loyalty, with a view only to the ultimate utility of power, and love, never forgetting itself in its object, are the attributes of men. Their purposes are formed on a general balance of compensating motives, and pursued only while their means appear not totally inadequate. The greater susceptibility, which is always the charm, and sometimes the misfortune, of women, deprives them of the same accurate view of the proportion of different objects. The one upon which they are intent, whether it be a lover, a parent, a husband, a child, a king, a preacher, a ball, or a bonnet, swallows up the rest. Hence the enthusiasm of their loyalty, the devotedness of their affection, the abandonment of self, and the general vehemence of emotion, which, in fiction as well as in reality, operate contagiously on our feelings. But our author has, in the Monastery, neglected the power of representing the female character, which he possesses so eminently, and, in general, uses so liberally. The heroine is milk and water, or any thing still more insipid. Dame Glendinning and Tibbie are the common furniture of a farm-house; and Mysie Happer and poor Catherine, though beautiful, are mere sketches.

But the great merit of the Monastery is, that it is a foundation for the ABBOT. This not only relieves, in a great measure, the reader from the slow detail, or the perplexing retracings and *éclaircissemens* which detain or interrupt him in a narrative that is purely fictitious, but is an improvement on some of the peculiar advantages of one that is historical. In the latter, the hard and meagre outline of his previous knowledge seldom contains more than the names and mutual relations of the principal personages, and what they had previously done, with very little of what they had previously felt. But where one fiction is founded on another, we are introduced not merely to persons who are notorious to us, but to old acquaintances and friends. The knight of Avenel, the abbot Ambrosius, and the gardener Blinkhoolie, are the Halbert, and Edward, and Boniface, into whose early associations and secret feelings we had been admitted. We meet them as we meet, in real life, with those whom we have known in long-past times, and in different situations, and are interested in tracing, sometimes the resemblance, and sometimes the contrast, between what has past and what is present; in observing the effect of new circumstances in modifying or confirming their old feelings, or in eliciting others which before lay unperceived. We view with interest the fiery freedom of Halbert's youth ripened into the steady and stern composure of the approved soldier and skilful politician; and when, as knight of Avenel, he sighs for birth and name, we recognize the feelings that drove him from the obscure security of a church vassal, to seek with his sword the means of ranking with those proud men who despised his clownish poverty. And when Ambrose acknowledges that, bent as he is by affliction, he has not forgotten the effect of beauty on the heart of youth—that even in the watches of the night, broken by the thoughts of an imprisoned queen, a distracted kingdom, a church laid waste and ruinous, come other thoughts than these suggest, and other feelings that belong to an earlier and happier course of life; a single allusion sends us back through the whole intervening time, and we see him again in the deep window-recess of Glendearg, and Mary's looks of simple yet earnest anxiety, watching for his assistance in their childish studies. The allusion would have been pretty, but how inferior if Ambrose had been a new character, and we had been forced to account for it by some vague theory as to his former history. The Abbot has, however, far greater advantages over its predecessor than those, great as they are, that arise from their relative situation. We escape from the dull tower of Glendearg, with its narrow valley and homely inmates, to Edinburgh, and Holyrood House, and Loch-leven Castle, and the field of Langside, and to high dames and mighty earls, and exchange the obscure squabbling of the hamlet and the convent for events where the passions of individuals decided the fate of kingdoms, and, above all, we exchange unintelligible fairyism for human actors and human feelings.

It is true there is a sorceress on the stage, but one endued with powers far greater for evil or for good than the White Lady. History has never described, or fiction invented, a character more truly tragic than Queen Mary. The most fruitful imagination could not have adorned her with more accomplishments, or exposed her to greater extremes of fortune, or alternated them with greater

rapidity. And the mystery which, after all the exertions of her friends and enemies, still rests on her conduct, and which our author has most skilfully left as dark as he found it, prevents our being either shocked or unmoved by her final calamities. The former would have been the case, if her innocence could have been established. We could not have borne to see such a being plunged, by a false accusation, from such happiness into such misery. The latter would have followed, if she could have been proved to be guilty. Her sufferings, bitter as they were, were less unmixed than those of Bothwell. He too endured a long imprisonment, but it was in a desolate climate, without the alleviations which even Elizabeth allowed to her rival, without the hope of escape, or the sympathy of devoted attendants: such was his misery, that his reason sunk under it. And though his sufferings were greater than those of his accomplice, if such she were, his crime was less. He had not to break the same restraints of intimate connexion and of sex. But nobody could read a tragedy of which his misfortunes formed the substance; because we are sure of his guilt, they will excite no interest. While we continue to doubt hers, Mary's will be intensely affecting.

Though KENILWORTH ranks high among our author's works, we think it inferior, as a whole, to his other tragedies, the Bride of Lammermoor, the historical part of Waverley, and the Abbot, both in materials and in execution.

Amy Robsart and Elizabeth occupy nearly the same space upon the canvas as Catherine Seyton and Mary. But almost all the points of interest, which are divided between Amy and Elizabeth, historical recollections, beauty, talents, attractive virtues and unhappy errors, exalted rank and deep misfortune, are accumulated in Mary; and we want altogether that union of the lofty and the elegant, of enthusiasm and playfulness, which enchanted us in Catherine. Amy is a beautiful specimen of that class which long ago furnished Desdemona: the basis of whose character is conjugal love, whose charm consists in its purity and its devotedness, whose fault springs from its undue prevalence over filial duty, and whose sufferings are occasioned by the preverted passions of him who is the object of it. Elizabeth owes almost all her interest to our early associations, and to her marvellous combination of the male and female dispositions, in those points in which they seem most incompatible. The representation of such a character loses much of its interest in history, and would be intolerable in pure fiction. In the former, its peculiarities are softened down by the distance, and Elizabeth appears a fine, but not an uncommon object—a great, unamiable sovereign; and the same peculiarities, shown up by the microscopic exaggeration of fiction, would, if judged only by the rules of fiction, offend as unnatural; but supported by the authority of history, would be most striking. A portrait might be drawn of Elizabeth, uniting the magnanimous courage, the persevering but governable anger, the power of weighing distant against immediate advantages, and the brilliant against the useful, and of subjecting all surrounding minds, even the most manly, to her influence, with the most craving vanity, the most irritable jealousy, the meanest duplicity, and the most capricious and unrelenting spite, that ever degraded the silliest and most hateful of her sex.

Sir Walter has not, we think, made the most of his opportunities. He has complied with the laws of poetical consistency, without recollecting that, in this instance, the notoriety of Elizabeth's history warranted their violation. Instead of pushing to the utmost the opposing qualities that formed her character, he has softened even the incidents that he has directly borrowed. When Leicester knelt before her at Kenilworth, ere she raised him she passed her hand over his head, so near as almost to touch his long curled and perfumed hair, and with a movement of fondness that seemed to intimate she would, if she dared, have made the motion a slight caress. Listen to sir James Melvil's account of the occurrence.

"I was required to stay till he was made earl of Leicester, which was done at Westminster, the queen herself helping to put on his ceremonial, he sitting upon his knees (kneeling) before her with great gravity; but she could not refrain from putting her hands into his neck, smilingly tickling him, the French ambassador and I standing by. Then she turned, asking me how I liked him?" Again, when she discovers Leicester's conduct, in which every cause of personal irritation is most skilfully accumulated, she punishes him only by a quarter of an hour's restraint under the custody of the earl-marshal.

When, at a later period, and under circumstances of much less aggravation, she detected his marriage with lady Essex, she actually imprisoned him. Our author has not ventured on the full vehemence of her affection or her rage. But, after all, his picture of the lion-hearted queen, though it might perhaps have been improved by the admission of stronger contrasts, is so vivid, and so magnificent, that we can hardly wish it other than it is.

The PIRATE is a bold attempt to make out a long and eventful story, from a very narrow circle of society, and a scene so circumscribed as scarcely to admit of any great scope or variety of action; and its failure, in a certain degree, must in fairness be ascribed chiefly to this scantiness and defect of the materials.

The FORTUNES OF NIGEL is of an historical character, and an attempt to describe and illustrate by examples the manners of the court, and, generally speaking, of the age of James I of England.

Without asserting the high excellence of SAINT RONAN'S WELL, we may venture to affirm that it does not deserve the contempt with which it has been treated by some critics. The story, indeed, is not very probable, and there are various inconsistencies in the plot; the characters, though apparently intended to be completely modern, are in some instances more suitable to the last generation; the hero's portrait is feebly drawn: the moral tone of the work is less correct and legitimate than that which pervades our author's preceding productions, and the impulses of feeling and humanity are less natural and forcible; but it is still a work which bears the marks of a master's hand, the interest is well sustained, the incidents are related with spirit, many of the dialogues are lively and pleasant, and not only the characters of the heroine, but also those of the landlady of Touchwood, are drawn with a discriminating and powerful pencil.

In the historical novels of REDGAUNTLET, QUENTIN DURWARD, and WOODSTOCK, the author dis-

plays a truly graphic power in the delineation of characters, which he sketches with an ease, and colours with a brilliancy, and scatters about with a profusion, which but few writers, in any age, have been able to accomplish. With spells of magic potency, and with the creations of a rich and varied fancy, so skilfully has he stolen us from ourselves, with such exquisite cunning has he extracted a kind of poetry from the common incidents of life, with such an extent of legendary knowledge, he has displayed so wonderful an aptitude in drawing from historic research those minute traits of manners and modifications in social life, which, by reason of the wide range which it traverses, and the rapidity with which it moves along, are in history too general and indistinct; that it would be worse than affectation to stand aloof from the general feeling, and to refuse our humble proportion of those "golden opinions he has bought from all sorts of men," and which have fixed him in so high a rank in the literature of his country.

The TALES OF THE CRUSADERS have not been received with that enthusiasm of delight which greeted some of our author's former productions: yet they undoubtedly possess considerable merit, and, amidst much that is feeble, uninteresting, and absurd, bear evident marks of sense and talent.

To sum up our observations on the Waverley Novels, in a few words, we think their author has succeeded by far the best in the representation of rustic and homely characters, and not in the ludicrous or contemptuous representation of them—but by making them at once more natural and more interesting than they had ever been made before in any work of fiction; by showing them, not as clowns to be laughed at, or wretches to be pitied and despised,—but as human creatures, with as many pleasures, and fewer cares, than their superiors—with affections not only as strong, but often as delicate, as those whose language is smoother—and with a vein of humour, a force of sagacity, and very frequently an elevation of fancy, as high and as natural as can be met with among more cultivated beings. The great merit of all these delineations is their admirable truth and fidelity, the whole manner and cast of the characters being accurately moulded to their condition; and the finer attributes, so blended and harmonized with the native rudeness and simplicity of their life and occupations, that they are made interesting and even noble beings, without the least particle of foppery or exaggeration, and delight and amuse us, without trespassing at all on the province of pastoral or romance.

Next to these, we think, he has found his happiest subjects, or at least displayed his greatest powers, in the delineation of the grand and gloomy aspects of nature, and of the dark and fierce passions of the heart. The natural gaiety of his temper does not indeed allow him to dwell long on such themes; but the sketches he occasionally introduces are executed with admirable force and spirit, and give a strong impression both of the vigour of his imagination and the variety of his talent. It is only in the third rank that we would place his pictures of chivalry and chivalrous character, his traits of gallantry, nobleness, and honour, and that bewitching assemblage of gay and gentle manners, with generosity, candour, and courage, which has long been familiar enough to readers and writers of novels, but has never before been represented with such an air of truth, and so much ease and happiness of execution.

Among his faults and failures, we must give the first place to his descriptions of virtuous young ladies, and his representations of the ordinary business of courtship and conversation in polished life. We admit that those things, as they are commonly conducted, are apt to be a little insipid to a mere critical spectator,—and that while they consequently require more heightening than strange adventures or grotesque persons, they admit less of exaggeration or ambitious ornament: yet we cannot think it necessary that they should be altogether so lame and mawkish as we generally find them in the hands of this spirited writer, whose powers really seem to require some stronger stimulus to bring them into action, than can be supplied by the flat realities of a peaceful and ordinary existence. His love of the ludicrous, it must also be observed, often betrays him into forced and vulgar exaggerations, and into the repetition of common and paltry stories; though it is but fair to add, that he does not detain us long with them, and makes amends, by the copiousness of his assortment, for the indifferent quality of some of the specimens. It is another consequence of this extreme abundance in which he revels and riots, and of the fertility of the imagination from which it is supplied, that he is at all times a little apt to overdo even those things which he does best. His most striking and highly-coloured characters appear rather too often, and go on rather too long. It is astonishing, indeed, with what spirit they are supported, and how fresh and animated they are to the very last; but still there is something too much of them, and they would be more waited for and welcomed, if they were not quite so lavish of their presence. It was reserved for Shakspeare alone to leave all his characters as new and unworn as he found them, and to carry Falstaff through the business of three several plays, and leave us as greedy of his sayings as at the moment of his first introduction. It is no light praise to the author before us, that he has sometimes reminded us of this, and, as we have before observed, of other inimitable excellencies in that most gifted of all inventors.

He is above all things national and Scottish, and never seems to feel the powers of a *giant* except when he touches his native soil. His countrymen alone, therefore, can have a full sense of his merits, or a perfect relish of his excellencies; and those only, indeed, of them, who have mingled, as he has done, pretty freely with the lower orders, and made themselves familiar not only with their language, but with the habits and traits of character of which it then only becomes expressive. It is one thing to understand the meaning of words, as they are explained by other words in a glossary or dictionary, and another to know their value, as expressive of certain feelings and humours in the speakers to whom they are native, and as signs both of temper and condition among those who are familiar with their import.

We shall make no apology to our readers for introducing here, the following animated delineation of the author of Waverley, from the pen of an acute critic.

"Sir Walter," says this writer, "has found out that facts are better than fiction; that there is no romance like the romance of real life; and that can we but arrive at what men feel, do, and say,

in striking and singular situations, the result will be more lively, audible, and full of vent, than the fine-spun cobwebs of the brain. Our author has conjured up the actual people he has to deal with, or as much as he could get of them, in 'their habits as they lived.' He has ransacked old chronicles, and poured the contents upon his page; he has squeezed out musty records; he has consulted way-faring pilgrims, bed-rid sibyls; he has invoked the spirits of the air; he has conversed with the living and the dead, and let them tell their story their own way; and by borrowing of others, has enriched his own genius with everlasting variety, truth, and freedom. He has taken his materials from the original, authentic sources, in large concrete masses, and has not tampered with, or too much frittered them away. He is the only amanuensis of truth and history. It is impossible to say how fine his writings in consequence are, unless we could describe how fine nature is. All that portion of the history of his country that he has touched upon, (wide as the scope is,) the manners, the personages, the events, the scenery, lives over again in his volumes. Nothing is wanting—the illusion is complete. There is a hurtling in the air, a trampling of feet upon the ground, as these perfect representations of human character, or fanciful belief, come thronging back upon the imagination. We will merely recal a few of the subjects of his pencil to the reader's recollection, for nothing we could add by way of note or commendation, could make the impression more vivid.

"There is (first and foremost, because the earliest of our acquaintance) the baron of Bradwardine, stately, kind-hearted, whimsical, and pedantic; and Flora Mac-Ivor, (whom even we forgive for her jacobitism,) the fierce Vich Ian Vohr, and Evan Dhu, constant in death, and Davie Gellatley, roasting his eggs, or turning his rhymes with restless volubility, and the two stag hounds that met Waverley, as fine as ever Titian painted, or Paul Veronese;—then there is old Balfour of Burley, brandishing his sword and his bible with fire-eyed fury, trying a fall with the insolent, gigantic Bothwell, at the change-house, and vanquishing him at the noble battle of Loudon-hill; there is Bothwell, himself, drawn to the life, proud, cruel, selfish, profligate—but with the love-letters of the gentle Alice, (written thirty years before,) and his verses to her memory, found in his pocket after his death; in the same volume of *Old Mortality*, is that lone figure, like one in Scripture, of the woman sitting on the stone, at the turning to the mountain, to warn Burley that there is a lion in his path; and the fawning Claverhouse, beautiful as a panther, smooth-looking, blood-spotted: and the fanatics, Macbriar and Muckle-wrath, crazed with zeal and sufferings; and the inflexible Morton, and the faithful Edith, who refused to 'give her hand to another, while her heart was with her lover in the deep and dead sea.' In *The Heart of Mid-Lothian*, we have Effie Deans, (that sweet faded flower,) and Jeanie, her more than sister, and old David Deans, the patriarch of St. Leonard's Crags, and Butler, and Dumbiedikes, eloquent in his silence, and Mr. Bartoline Saddletree, and his prudent helpmate, and Porteous, swinging in the wind, and Madge Wildfire, full of finery and madness, and her ghastly mother. Again, there is Meg Merrilies, standing on her rock, stretched on her bier, with 'her head to the east,' and Dirk Hatteraick, (equal to Shakspeare's Master Barnardine,) and Glossin, the soul of an attorney, and Dandie Dinmont, with his terrier-pack and his pony Dumple, and the fiery colonel Mannering, and the modish old counsellor Pleydell, and Dominie Sampson: and Rob Roy, (like the eagle in his eyrie,) and Baillie Nicol Jarvie, and the inimitable major Galbraith, Rashleigh Osbaldistone, and Die Vernon, the best of secret-keepers; and in the *Antiquary*, the ingenious Mr. Oldbuck, and the old beadesman, Edie Ochiltree, and that preternatural figure of old Elspeth, a living shadow, in whom the lamp of life had been long extinguished, had it not been fed by remorse and 'thick-coming' recollections; and that striking picture of feudal tyranny and fiendish pride, the unhappy earl of Glenallan; and the Black Dwarf, and his friend, Hobbie of the Heughfoot, (the cheerful hunter,) and his cousin Grace Armstrong, fresh and laughing like the morning; and the Children of the Mist, and the baying of the blood-hound, that tracks their steps at a distance, (the hollow echoes are in our ears now,) and Amy and her hapless love, and the villain Varney, and the deep voice of George of Douglas—and the immovable Balafré, and Master Oliver, the barber, in Quentin Durward—and the quaint humour of the Fortunes of Nigel, and the comic spirit of Peveril of the Peak—and the fine old English romance of Ivanhoe. What a list of names! What a host of associations! What a thing is human life! What a power is that of genius! What a world of thought and feeling is thus rescued from oblivion! How many hours of heartfelt satisfaction has our author given to the gay and thoughtless! How many sad hearts has he soothed in pain and solitude! It is no wonder that the public repay, with lengthened applause and gratitude, the pleasure they receive. He writes as fast as they can read, and he does not write himself down. He is always in the public eye, and we do not tire of him. His worst is better than any other person's best. His *back-grounds* (and his latter works are little else but back-grounds capitally made out,) are more attractive than the principal and most complicated figures of other writers. His works (taken together) are almost like a new edition of human nature. This is indeed to be an author!

"The political bearing of the *Scotch Novels* has been a considerable recommendation to them. They are a relief to the mind, rarified as it has been with modern philosophy, and heated with ultra-radicalism. The candour of sir Walter's historic pen levels our bristling prejudices, and sees fair play between roundheads and cavaliers—between protestant and papist. He is a writer reconciling all the diversities of human nature to the reader. He does not enter into the hostile distinctions of sects and parties, but treats of the strength or the infirmity of the human mind, of the virtues and vices of the human breast, as they are to be found blended in the whole race of mankind. Nothing can show more handsomely, or be more gallantly executed."

Another critic attempts a comparison between our author and the late lord Byron, as follows:—

"The two most celebrated writers of this age, lord Byron and sir Walter Scott, resemble each other not a little in their works. Their respective series of productions, from Childe Harold to Don Juan, and from Waverley to Woodstock, though differing essentially in structure, object, and subject, agree, nevertheless, in several particulars.

Each series, for example, evinces a remarkable qualification of mind in the author, and each betrays a remarkable defect. It is likewise a singular coincidence, that the same qualification and the same defect should exist in both, viz. extraordinary facility of invention as far as respects *composition*, and difficulty of invention as far as respects *character*. Both authors are about equally remarkable for the said power, and (if the expression may be used) impotence of mind, in these different provinces of inventiou.

"And first as to composition. The prodigal effusion of poetry, which in Childe Harold, the Corsair, the Giaour, &c., &c., almost overwhelmed the reading world, is only to be paralleled by the quantity of prose so dissolutely expended in the composition of Waverley, Guy Mannering, &c., &c., a series to which we can see indeed no probable termination. Both the poems and the novels indicate a fertility of mind in this respect, amounting to what might be designated even a rank luxuriance. Before we had eaten down one crop of this intellectual pasture, another began to present itself, and a third growth shot up whilst our heads were deep in the second. There is here an obvious resemblance between the two series of works now compared. It would be hard to say whether the poet or the novelist were the greater spendthrift of his words. In both, eloquence is of so splendid and profluent a nature, that it takes the form, and might assume the name, of splendid loquacity. The labour with these authors seems to have been merely that of transcribing from the folds of the brain to the leaves of their paper. Facility in composition—and when we say this, we do not mean fluency without a considerable degree of solidity,—is the qualification in which these two great writers resemble each other, and that, perhaps, in which they most surpass all their contemporaries. We allow there is much difference between the 'weighty bullion' of Childe Harold, or Waverley, and the 'French wire' into which the small portion of sterling ore, forming the real worth of Sardanapalus, or Red Gauntlet, is drawn; but still, the same ease of language, the same wealth of imagery, is everywhere displayed, even in their most precipitate works, by each writer,—and with about equal claims on our admiration. Sir Walter, like his late noble competitor for the crown of fame, in his more recent works, seems to have depended almost wholly on the power of writing *ad infinitum*, agreeably upon any or no subject. But all-powerful as those two great writers may be considered, in the department of eloquence, and what may be generally described as composition, they are both radically, though not perhaps equally, impotent in the province of character, variously modified by the different circumstances in which it is placed throughout all lord Byron's poems,—that of a noble-minded, but depraved being, of fine feelings, but irregular passions, more or less satirical and misanthropical in his disposition, gloomy, heart-withered, reckless, and irreligious. Sir Walter Scott has taken a circle of somewhat greater circumference, but within which he is just as strictly confined. He has excogitated, or his experience has furnished him with a certain definite number of characters, and these he plays as he would chessmen, sometimes bringing one forward, sometimes another, but without the power of increasing the number of men on the board."

The Waverley novels were highly admired by Byron; he never travelled without them. "They are," said he to captain Medwin one day, "a library in themselves—a perfect literary treasure. I could read them once a year with new pleasure." During that morning he had been reading one of sir Walter's novels, and delivered the following criticism: "How difficult it is to say any thing new! Who was that voluptuary of antiquity who offered a reward for a new pleasure? Perhaps all nature and art could not supply a new idea. This page, for instance, is a brilliant one; it is full of wit. But let us see how much is original. This passage," continued his lordship, "comes from Shakspeare; this *bon mot* from one of Sheridan's comedies; this observation from another writer; and yet the ideas are new moulded, and perhaps Scott was not aware of their being plagiarisms. It is a bad thing to have a good memory." "I should not like to have you for a critic," observed captain Medwin. "Set a thief to catch a thief," was the reply.

On the death of the illustrious Byron, sir Walter Scott evinced his candour and liberality of mind in the following tribute to his lordship's memory:—

"That mighty genius, which walked amongst men as something superior to ordinary mortality, and whose powers were beheld with wonder, and something approaching to terror, as if we knew not whether they were of good or of evil, is laid as soundly to rest as the poor peasant whose ideas never went beyond his daily task. The voice of just blame; and that of malignant censure, are at once silenced; and we feel almost as if the great luminary of heaven had suddenly disappeared from the sky, at the moment when every telescope was levelled for the examination of the spots which dimmed its brightness. It is not now the question what were Byron's faults—what his mistakes: but how is the blank which he has left in British literature to be filled up? Not, we fear, in one generation, which, among many highly-gifted persons, has produced none who approach Byron in originality, the first attribute of genius. Only thirty-seven years old—so much already done for immortality—so much time remaining, as it seems to us short-sighted mortals, to maintain and to extend his fame, and to atone for errors in conduct and levities in composition: who will not grieve that such a race has been shortened, though not always keeping the strait path—such a light extinguished, though sometimes flaming to dazzle and to bewilder? One word on this ungrateful subject ere we quit it for ever.

"The errors of lord Byron arose neither from depravity of heart,—for Nature had not committed the anomaly of uniting to such extraordinary talents an imperfect moral sense,—nor from feelings dead to the admiration of virtue. No man had ever a kinder heart for sympathy, or a more open hand for the relief of distress; and no mind was ever more formed for the enthusiastic admiration of noble actions, provided he was convinced that the actors had proceeded on disinterested principles. But his wonderful genius was of a nature which disdained restraint, even when restraint was most wholesome. When at school, the tasks in which he excelled were those only which he undertook voluntarily; and his situation as a young man of rank, with strong passions, and in the uncontrolled enjoyment of considerable fortune, added to that impatience of strictness or coercion which was natural to him as an author; he refused

to plead at the bar of criticism. As a man, he would not submit to be morally amenable to the tribunal of public opinion. Remonstrances from a friend, of whose intentions and kindness he was secure, had often great weight with him; but there were few who could venture on a task so difficult. Reproof he endured with impatience, and reproach hardened him in his error; so that he often resembled the gallant war-steed, who rushes forward on the steel that wounds him. In the most painful crisis of his private life, he evinced this irritability and impatience of censure in such a degree, as almost to resemble the noble victim of the bull-fight, which is more maddened by the squibs, darts, and petty annoyances of the unworthy crowds beyond the lists, than by the lance of his nobler, and (so to speak) his more legitimate antagonist. In a word, much of that in which he erred was in bravado and scorn of his censors, and was done with the motive of Dryden's despot, 'to show his arbitrary power.' It is needless to say that his was a false and prejudicial view of such a contest; and if the noble bard gained a sort of triumph, by compelling the world to read poetry, though mixed with baser matter, because it was his, he gave in return an unworthy triumph to the unworthy, beside deep sorrow to those whose applause, in his cooler moments, he most valued.

"It was the same with his politics, which on several occasions assumed a tone menacing and contemptuous to the constitution of his country; while, in fact, he was in his own heart sufficiently sensible, not only of his privileges as a Briton, but of the distinction attending his high birth and rank, and was peculiarly sensitive of those shades which constitute what is termed the manners of a gentleman. Indeed, notwithstanding his having employed epigrams, and all the petty war of wit, when such would have been much better abstained from, he would have been found, had a collision taken place between the different parties in the state, exerting all his energies in defence of that to which he naturally belonged.

"We are not Byron's apologists, for now, alas! he needs none. His excellencies will now be universally acknowledged, and his faults (let us hope and believe) not remembered in his epitaph. It will be recollected what a part he has sustained in British literature since the first appearance of Childe Harold, a space of nearly sixteen years. There has been no reposing under the shade of his laurels, no living upon the resource of past reputation; none of those petty precautions which little authors call taking care of their fame. Byron let his fame take care of itself. His foot was always in the arena, his shield hung always in the lists; and although his own gigantic renown increased the difficulty of the struggle, since he could produce nothing, however great, which exceeded the public estimate of his genius, yet he advanced to the honourable contest again and again, and came always off with distinction, almost always with complete triumph. As various in composition as Shakspeare himself (this will be admitted by all who are acquainted with his Don Juan,) he has embraced every topic in human life, and sounded every string on the divine harp, from its slightest to its most powerful and heart-astounding tones. There is scarce a passion or a situation which has escaped his pen; and he might be drawn, like Garrick, between the weeping and the laughing muse, although his most powerful efforts have certainly been dedicated to Melpomene. His genius seemed as prolific as various. The most prodigal use did not exhaust his powers, but seemed rather to increase their vigour. Neither Childe Harold, nor any of the most beautiful of his earlier tales, contain more exquisite morsels of poetry than are to be found scattered through the cantos of Don Juan, amidst verses which he appears to have thrown off with an effort as spontaneous as that of a tree resigning its leaves to the wind. But that noble tree will never more bear fruit or blossom! It has been cut down in its strength, and the past is all that remains to us of Byron. We can scarce reconcile ourselves to the idea—scarce think that the voice is silent forever, which, bursting so often on our ear, was often heard with rapturous admiration, sometimes with regret, but always with the deepest interest:

> All that's bright must fade,
> The brightest still the fleetest.

"With a strong feeling of awful sorrow, we take leave of the subject. Death creeps upon our most serious as well as upon our most idle employments; and it is a reflection solemn and gratifying, that he found our Byron in no moment of levity, but contributing his fortune, and hazarding his life, in behalf of a people only endeared to him by their past glories, and as fellow-creatures suffering under the yoke of a heathen oppressor. To have fallen in a crusade for freedom and humanity, as in olden times, it would have been an atonement for the blackest crimes, and may in the present be allowed to expiate greater follies than even exaggerated calumny has propagated against Byron."

The first person on whom his majesty George IV conferred a baronetage, was sir Walter Scott; and in August, 1822, when the king honoured Edinburgh with a visit, sir Walter acted as croupier, or vice-president, at a dinner given by the lord Provost and corporation, to the royal guest.

In the summer of 1825, sir Walter paid a visit to Ireland, where he was most hospitably received by the sons of the Shamrock. During his stay in Dublin he frequently visited the library adjoining St. Patrick's cathedral; on one of these occasions the deputy librarian, who happened to be a collegian, having got into conversation with the (*then*) "Great unknown," wished to take him by surprise, and thereby prove his own dexterity. With this view he exclaimed, "Oh, sir Walter, do you know that it was only lately I have had time to get through your Redgauntlet." "Sir," replied sir Walter, "I never met with such a book." The librarian stood rebuked, and said nothing.

As sir Walter and a friend were one day slowly sauntering along the High-street, Edinburgh, their ears were saluted by the cries of an Italian vender of images, who, in broken English, was extolling his brittle ware to excite custom. The chief burthen of the itinerant merchant's song, however, was the bust of *de Grate Unknown*, which he declared to be a perfect likeness. He now offered his wares to the inspection of our two gentlemen, still dwelling upon "de Grate unknown," as de "most parfaite likeness of de wonderful original himself." The friend of sir Walter desired him to look at the features of the latter, when the poor fellow, in an ecstasy of joy, exclaimed, "'tis he, 'tis de grand unknown! I make my most profits by him, and I will beg him to take von, two, tree images, all vat he like, for not any ting."

The following lively description of sir Walter's

personal appearance was written by a gentleman who visited Edinburgh about two years ago:—

"My departure from ——— was so sudden, that I had no time to seek letters of introduction; and the Scotch are not naturally fond of introductions which only give them trouble; but I had resolved upon seeing sir Walter Scott before I left Edinburgh, and, had Constable been open, I could have been at no loss, but his door was unfortunately shut. I contrived, however, to get an introduction to Mr.——, the historical painter, with whom I knew the poet was acquainted, and with whom it appears he spends many an hour, but I was just thirty minutes too late! Sir Walter had been there, had told the painter some anecdotes which he assured me threw him into convulsions, and that he had been laughing ever since; and I believed him, for he was hardly out of a convulsion when I entered. Disappointed—I proceeded to the parliament-house (where sir Walter sits as chief clerk to the lord commissioners,) and as soon as I found out my way into court, I had the good luck to find the object of my pursuit. I needed no monitor to point him out—I knew him instantly. I had never seen him before in my life; but I had read some of his works, and, from the pictorial and ideal together, I had formed in my mind his face exactly—and had I seen him hobbling in his favourite 'Prince's-street,' I should have known him to be sir Walter Scott. I pushed on to the advocates' bench (a place reserved exclusively for the advocates,) to be as near him as possible—there I had no right to be, certainly, but, much to the credit of Scotch manners, they saw I was a stranger—knew no better—and they suffered me to remain. On first beholding sir W. Scott, I felt all the veneration which is due to the good and the great. I confess I could have knelt down and worshipped him, though to man I never bent a knee. I shall endeavour to describe his person—he is tall, five feet ten or eleven inches, rather stout than otherwise, but not corpulent—appears to be about sixty—is healthy, but lamed in one of his legs, and walks with difficulty. His hair is pure white, and, falling thinly over his ruddy forehead, gives him a venerable aspect. You might fancy him the 'Village Preacher' of Oliver Goldsmith, and his costume heightens the resemblance. His complexion is ruddy. His head is singularly formed; uncommonly high from the eye-brows to the crown, and tapers upwards, somewhat ' the conical form, but there is no projection of the head, the bump which philosophers lay so much stress upon as being a sign of great intellect. His eyes are small, and I think dark-blue—you can seldom catch their expression, on account of the great projection of the eye-brows; but when you do, the look is divine; they express a mine of intellect, and a kind heart. I wonder many who have seen him say, his countenance is expressive of 'shrewd cunning'—there is no cunning in his looks—nothing but goodness and genius. His manners are prepossessing, and he is very accessible. I perceived, whenever an advocate or layman came to speak with him, he took him kindly by the hand—and then looked so kindly. The Scotch venerate him, as well they may:—'suum magnum ingenium honorem illis facit.' I gazed on this extraordinary man until his image was indelibly engraven on my organs of vision; and, were I a portrait painter, I could now paint his likeness from recollection. Observing I was a stranger, placed in the advocates' seat, and no advocate, and appearing, I have no doubt, very curious, he gazed upon me—we looked at each other, like poor Sterne and the fair glover, for some time—it was curiosity in me, but condescension in him."

It is not generally known that there was a poet of the name of Walter Scott, before the present celebrated bard. He lived about the middle of the seventeenth century, and describes himself as

> An old souldier and no scholler;
> And one that can write none
> But just the letters of his name.

On the death of his grandfather, sir Robert Scott, of Thirlstone, his father, having no means to bring up his children, put this Walter to attend cattle in the field; "but," says he, "I gave them the short cut at last, and left the kine in the corn; and ever since that time, I have continued a souldier abroad and at home." He left a poem written at the age of seventy-three, dedicated to two gentlemen of the name of Scott, which he thus concludes:

> Begone my book, stretch forth thy wings and fly,
> Amongst the nobles and gentility;
> Thou'rt not to sell to scavengers and clowns,
> But given to worthy persons of renown.
> The number's few I've printed, in regard
> My charges have been great, and I hope reward;
> I caused not to print many above twelve score,
> And the printers are engaged that they shall print no more.

Lately at a private dinner-party, sir Walter Scott, Mr. H. Mackenzie,* and Mr. Alison† happened to be present. In taking their seats, *sans cérémonie*, the baronet found himself placed between these two illustrious individuals. The relative position of these three celebrated characters soon attracted the attention of a gentleman present, who exclaimed—

> Our host hath his guests most happily placed;
> See Genius supported by Feeling and Taste.

We know of no species of composition so delightful as that which presents us with personal anecdotes of eminent men; and if its greatest charm be in the gratification of our curiosity, it is a curiosity, at least, that has its origin in enthusiasm. We are anxious to know all that is possible to be known of those who have an honoured place in public opinion. It is not merely that every circumstance derives a value from the person to whom it relates; but an apparently insignificant anecdote often throws an entirely new light on the history of the most admired works: the most noble actions, intellectual discoveries, or brilliant deeds, though they shed a broad and lasting lustre round those who have achieved them, occupy but a small portion of the life of an individual; and we are not unwilling to penetrate the dazzling glory, and to see how the remaining intervals are filled up—to look into the minor details, to detect incidental foibles, and to be satisfied what qualities they have in common with ourselves, as well as distinct from us, entitled to our pity, or raised above our imitation. The heads of great men, in short, are not all we want to get a sight of; we wish to add the limbs, the drapery, the back-ground. It is thus that, in the intimacy of retirement, we enjoy with them "calm contemplation and poetic ease." We see the careless smile play upon their expressive features; we hear the dictates of unstudied wisdom, or the sallies of sportive wit fall without disguise from their

* The celebrated author of the "Man of Feeling."
† Author of "Essays on the Nature and Principles of Taste."

lips; we see, in fine, how poets, and philosophers, and scholars, live, converse, and behave. With these sentiments, our readers will not be surprised at our introducing here the following literary and miscellaneous dialogue, translated from the tour of an eminent foreigner.

"Sir W. Scott.—'Well, doctor, how did you like the banks of the Tweed and Melrose Abbey?'

Dr. Pichot.—'They are worthy of the bard who has sung them. I, besides, paid a visit to Abbotsford, and surveyed with interest your Gothic sculptures, your armoury, and pictures, some of which are speaking representations. I shall now re-peruse, with double pleasure, the Lay of the Last Minstrel, and your other works.'

Sir Walter Scott.—'Are you acquainted with the Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border?'

Dr. Pichot.—'A great part of it; but more especially with your own imitations of the old border ballads. It was, I believe, your first publication?'

Sir Walter Scott.—'Not exactly. I made my *début* in 1799, with an imitation of some ballads of Bürger, and a translation of the chivalresque drama of Gœthe, Goetz von Berlichingen. These essays procured me the acquaintance of the famous Lewis, author of the Monk, and surnamed Monk Lewis. He was a very agreeable man, whose imagination was particularly fond of the supernatural, and of popular superstitions. I read to him my Eve of St. John and Glenfinlas; and he requested my permission to insert these two poems in his Tales of Wonder.'

Dr. Pichot.—'I should apprehend that the Monk of Lewis is a little out of fashion.'

Sir Walter Scott.—'It is a work written with power. It produced an effect, although it came after the romances of Mrs. Radcliffe. Like the latter, Lewis chose the south as the seat of his action: in a southern atmosphere, passions as well as vegetation have more energy; passion is wanted in works of this kind. The marvellous alone will not suffice for so sceptical an age as this. I should have liked Mrs. Radcliffe more, if she had been less anxious about the explanation of her mysteries. Lewis wrote as if he believed.'

Dr. Pichot.—'Might not Mrs. Radcliffe, as a woman, be in dread of passing for superstitious?'

Sir Walter Scott.—'It may be so. Her works, compared with the common novel, are what melo-dramas are, compared with tragedies and comedies. Terror is their chief spring of action. But there are some good melo-drames. Walpole created the melo-dramatic romance; but Mrs. Radcliffe surpassed Walpole. Lewis and Maturin have alone come near Mrs. Radcliffe. The Montorio Family is a very astonishing work.'

Dr. Pichot.—'Was your Goetz von Berlichingen published at Edinburgh?'

Sir Walter Scott.—'No, I published it at London, where I then was. It is from the same epoch that my acquaintance with Messrs. Canning and Frere commenced.'

Dr. Pichot.—'You have contributed to transfer a portion of the English bookselling business to Edinburgh.'

Sir Walter Scott.—'Authors doubtless make publishers; but Mr. Archibald Constable has done much for Scotch authorship.'

Dr. Pichot.—'Scotland has always supplied great men to the literary republic.'

Sir Walter Scott.—'The patriarch of our authors is Mr. Henry Mackenzie, who knew Hume and Robertson intimately. In his life of John Home, he has charmingly described the literary society of Edinburgh during the second half of the last century. He is a poet and romance-writer; a poet in versification, and a poet also in his prose fictions; indeed, it is difficult for a good romance-writer not to be so in some degree. He is an ingenious critic in his periodical essays (the Mirror and Lounger,) and a pathetic author in his novels. There is a little of Sterne's manner in his Man of Feeling; the pathos of Julia de Roubigné is more natural and pure.'

Dr. Pichot.—'Scotland continues to enrich English literature with its best works. Thomas Campbell is a Scotchman.'

Sir Walter Scott.—'A Scotchman and a great poet. Lord Byron is also a little Scotch.'

Dr. Pichot.—'May I ask you on what terms you are?'

Sir Walter Scott.—'I received a letter from him yesterday. We are in correspondence, and that of an amicable and intimate description.'

Dr. Pichot.—'He has scoffed a little at Scotland.'

Sir Walter Scott.—'The Edinburgh Review went much too far. Lord Byron is very irritable.'

Dr. Pichot.—'I saw the portrait of Mr. Jeffrey at Abbotsford. I presume you are friendly.'

Sir Walter Scott.—'Yes; he is one of our literary notables, and a distinguished barrister.'

Dr. Pichot.—'Have you also appeared at the bar?'

Sir Walter Scott.—'Like all young barristers, I have pleaded on criminal trials.'

"I shall here add, from the authority of Mr. Lockhart, that sir Walter, when called to the bar, at the age of twenty-one, gave but few testimonies of his talent. He once, however, had an opportunity of speaking before the General Assembly, and the question having suddenly kindled his powers, he expressed himself with a flood of eloquence. The famous Dr. Blair was present, and said aloud, 'This young barrister will be a great man.'

"I resume our dialogue. Dr. Pichot.—'You quitted pleading for a judicial situation.'

Sir Walter Scott.—'I was not appointed clerk of the Court of Session till after I had published Marmion. I was already sheriff of Selkirkshire.'

"Lady Scott entered the drawing-room, and laid a box on the table, which she opened, and showed to Mr. Crabbe, and then to me: this box contained a kind of cockade or St. Andrew's cross, composed of pearls and precious stones found on the coast of Scotland.

Lady Scott.—'It is a St. Andrew's cross, which the ladies of Scotland have commissioned sir Walter to present to his majesty before he alights. It is the work of a lady of high rank and great beauty.'

"I naturally admired the cross, the pearls, and the delicacy of the workmanship. Two children now entered; one the youngest son of sir Walter, and the other, I believe, a brother of Mr. Lockhart; 'those are his majesty's two pages,' said lady Scott to me; and she explained to me that they would be pages only during the residence of the king at Edinburgh. I asked sir Walter if he had not another son; and he replied, that he had a son twenty years of age, a lieutenant in the army."

The late dreadful crisis in the commercial world, which began with the bankers and ended with the

booksellers, caused the failure of the house of Constable and Co. of Edinburgh, who were not only the publishers of our author's works, but with whom he was associated in business, as a sleeping partner. This disastrous event necessarily removed the thin veil which had hitherto concealed the "Great Unknown" from the full gaze of an admiring public. The avowal of sir Walter himself was made at the Edinburgh Theatrical Fund Dinner, the details of which, from their peculiar interest in relation to the subject of this sketch, we are bound to lay fully before our readers.

"The first Annual Dinner of the Edinburgh Theatrical Fund was held yesterday (24th Feb. 1827,) in the Assembly rooms, sir Walter Scott in the chair; and near whom sat the earl of Fife, lord Meadowbank, sir John Hope of Pinkie, bart., admiral Adam, baron Clerk Rattray, Gilbert Innes, esq., James Walker, esq., Robert Dundas, esq., Alexander Smith, esq., &c.

"After dinner the usual toasts were given, when the chairman, in an appropriate speech, proposed the memory of his late royal highness the duke of York.—Drank in solemn silence.

"The chairman (Sir Walter Scott) then requested that gentlemen would fill a bumper, as full as it would hold, while he would say only a few words. He was in the habit of hearing speeches, and he knew the feeling with which long ones were regarded. He was sure that it was perfectly unnecessary for him to enter into any vindication of the dramatic art, which they had come here to support. This, however, he considered to be the proper time and proper occasion for him to say a few words on that love of representation which was an innate feeling in human nature. It was the first amusement that the child had—it grew greater as he grew up; and, even in the decline of life, nothing amused so much as when a common tale is well told. The first thing a child does is to ape his schoolmaster, by flogging a chair. It was an enjoyment natural to humanity. It was implanted in our very nature, to take pleasure from such representations, at proper times, and on proper occasions. In all ages the theatrical art had kept pace with the improvement of mankind, and with the progress of letters and the fine arts. As he has advanced from the ruder stages of society, the love of dramatic representations has increased, and all works of this nature have been improved, in character and in structure. They had only to turn their eyes to the history of ancient Greece, although he did not pretend to be very deeply versed in ancient history. Its first tragic poet commanded a body of troops at Marathon. The second and next were men who shook Athens with their discourses, as their theatrical works shook the theatre itself. If they turned to France, in the time of Lewis the fourteenth, that era in the classical history of that country, they would find that it was referred to by all Frenchmen as the golden age of the drama there. And also in England, in the time of queen Elizabeth, the drama began to mingle deeply and wisely in the general politics of Europe, not only not receiving laws from others, but giving laws to the world, and vindicating the rights of mankind. (Cheers.) There have been various times when the dramatic art subsequently fell into disrepute. Its professors have been stigmatised, and laws have been passed against them, less dishonourable to them than to the statesmen by whom they were passed, and to the legislators by whom they were adopted. What were the times in which these laws were passed? Was it not when virtue was seldom inculcated as a moral duty, that we were required to relinquish the most rational of all our amusements, when the clergy were enjoined celibacy, and when the laity were denied the right to read their bibles. He thought that it must have been from a notion of penance that they erected the drama into an ideal place of profaneness, and the tent of sin. He did not mean to dispute that there were many excellent persons who thought differently from him, and they were entitled to assume that they were not guilty of any hypocrisy in doing so. He gave them full credit for their tender consciences, in making these objections, which did not appear to him relevant to those persons, if they were what they usurp themselves to be; and if they were persons of worth and piety, he should crave the liberty to tell them, that the first part of their duty was charity, and that if they did not choose to go to the theatre, they at least could not deny that they might give away, from their superfluity, what was required for the relief of the sick, the support of the aged, and the comfort of the afflicted. These were duties enjoined by our religion itself. (Loud cheers.) The performers are in a particular manner entitled to the support or regard, when in old age or distress, of those who had partaken of the amusements of those places which they render an ornament to society. Their art was of a peculiarly delicate and precarious nature. They had to serve a long apprenticeship. It was very long before even the first-rate geniuses could acquire the mechanical knowledge of the stage business. They must languish long in obscurity before they can avail themselves of their natural talents; and after that, they have but a short space of time, during which they are fortunate if they can provide the means of comfort in the decline of life. That comes late, and lasts but a short time, after which they are left dependent. Their limbs fail, their teeth are loosened, their voice is lost, and they are left, after giving happiness to others, in a most disconsolate state. The public were liberal and generous to those deserving their protection. It was a sad thing to be dependent on the favour, or, he might say, in plain terms, on the caprice of the public; and this more particularly for a class of persons of whom extreme prudence is not the character. There might be instances of opportunities being neglected; but let them tax themselves, and consider the opportunities they had neglected, and the sums of money they had wasted; let every gentleman look into his own bosom, and say whether these were circumstances which would soften his own feelings, where he to be plunged into distress. He put it to every generous bosom—to every better feeling—to say what consolation was it to old age to be told that you might have made provision at a time which had been neglected—(loud cheers) —and to find it objected, that if you had pleased you might have been wealthy. He had hitherto been speaking of what, in theatrical language, were called *stars*, but they were sometimes fallen ones. There was another class of sufferers naturally and necessarily connected with the theatre, without whom it was impossible to go on. The sailors have a saying, every man cannot be a boatswain. If there must be persons to act Hamlet, there must also be people to act Laertes the King,

Rosencrantz, and Guildenstern, otherwise a drama cannot go on. If even Garrick himself were to rise from the dead, he could not act Hamlet alone. There must be generals, colonels, commanding-officers, and subalterns; but what are the private soldiers to do? Many have mistaken their own talents, and have been driven in early youth to try the stage, to which they are not competent. He would know what to say to the poet and the artist. He would say that it was foolish, and he would recommend to the poet to become a scribe, and the artist to paint sign-posts—(loud laughter.)—But he could not send the player adrift, for if he cannot play Hamlet, he must play Guildenstern. Where there are many labourers wages must be low, and no man in such a situation can decently support a wife and family, and save something off his income for old age. What is this man to do in latter life? Are you to cast him off like an old hinge, or a piece of useless machinery, which has done its work? To a person who has contributed to our amusement, this would be unkind, ungrateful, and unchristian. His wants are not of his own making, but arise from the natural sources of sickness and old age. It cannot be denied that there is one class of sufferers to whom no imprudence can be ascribed, except on first entering on the profession. After putting his hand to the dramatic plough, he cannot draw back, but must continue at it, and toil till death release him, or charity, by its milder assistance, steps in to render that want more tolerable. He had little more to say, except that he sincerely hoped that the collection to-day, from the number of respectable gentlemen present, would meet the views entertained by the patrons. He hoped it would do so. They should not be disheartened. Though they could not do a great deal, they might do something. They had this consolation, that every thing they parted with from their superfluity would do some good. They would sleep the better themselves when they have been the means of giving sleep to others. It was ungrateful and unkind, that those who had sacrificed their youth to our amusement should not receive the reward due to them, but should be reduced to hard fare in their old age. We cannot think of poor Falstaff going to bed without his cup of sack, or Macbeth fed on bones as marrowless as those of Banquo—(loud cheers and laughter.) As he believed that they were all as fond of the dramatic art as he was in his younger days, he would propose that they should drink 'The Theatrical Fund,' with thee times three.

"Mr. Mackay rose on behalf of his brethren, to return their thanks for the toast just drunk. After ably advocating the cause of the Fund, he concluded by tendering to the meeting, in the name of his brethren and sisters, their unfeigned thanks for their liberal support, and begged to propose the health of the Patrons of the Edinburgh Theatrical Fund. (Cheers.)

"Lord Meadowbank begged to propose a health, which, in an assembly of Scotsmen, would be received, not with an ordinary feeling of delight, but with rapture and enthusiasm.—He knew that it would be painful to his feelings if he were to speak to him in the terms which his heart prompted; and that he had sheltered himself under his native modesty from the applause which he deserved. But it was gratifying at last to know that these clouds were now dispelled, and that the Great Unknown—the mighty magician—(here the room literally rung with applauses, which were continued for some minutes)—the minstrel of our country, who had conjured up, not the phantoms of departed ages, but realities, now stands revealed before the eyes and affections of his country. In his presence it would ill become him, as it would be displeasing to that distinguished person, to say, if he were able, what every man must feel, who recollects the enjoyment he has had from the great efforts of his mind and genius. It has been left for him, by his writings, to give his country an imperishable name. He had done more for his country, by illuminating its annals, by illustrating the deeds of its warriors and statesmen, than any man that ever existed, or was produced, within its territory. He has opened up the peculiar beauties of this country to the eyes of foreigners. He has exhibited the deeds of those patriots and statesmen to whom we owe the freedom we now enjoy. He would give the health of sir Walter Scott, which was drunk with enthusiastic cheering.

"Sir Walter Scott certainly did not think that, in coming here to-day, he would have the task of acknowledging, before three hundred gentlemen, a secret which, considering that it was communicated to more than twenty people, was remarkably well kept. He was now before the bar of his country, and might be understood to be on trial before lord Meadowbank as an offender; yet he was sure that every impartial jury would bring in a verdict of Not Proven. He did not now think it necessary to enter into the reasons of his long silence. Perhaps he might have acted from caprice. He had now to say, however, that the merits of these works, if they had any, and their faults, were entirely imputable to himself. (Long and loud cheering.) He was afraid to think on what he had done. 'Look on't again I dare not.' He had thus far unbosomed himself, and he knew that it would be reported to the public. He meant, when he said that he was the author, that he was the total and undivided author. (With the exception of quotations, there was not a single word that was not derived from himself, or suggested in the course of his reading. The wand was now broken, and the rod buried. You will allow me further to say, with Prospero, 'Tis your breath that has filled my sails; and to crave one single toast in the capacity of the author of these novels; and he would dedicate a bumper to the health of one who has represented some of those characters, of which he had endeavoured to give the skeleton, with a degree of liveliness which rendered him grateful. He would propose the health of his friend Baillie Nicol Jarvie—(loud applause,)—and he was sure, that when the author of Waverley and Rob Roy drinks to Nicol Jarvie, it would be received with that degree of applause to which that gentleman has always been accustomed, and that they would take care that, on the present occasion, it should be prodigious! (Long and vehement applause.)

"Mr. Mackay, who spoke with great humour in the character of Baillie Jarvie.—My conscience! My worthy father the deacon could not have believed that his son could hae had sic a compliment paid to him by the Great Unknown.

"Sir Walter Scott.—Not unknown now, Mr. Baillie.

"Mr. Mackay.—He had been long indentified with the Baillie, and he was now vain of the cognomen which he had worn for eight years, and he questioned if any of his brethren in the council

had given such universal satisfaction. (Loud laughter and applause.) Before he sat down he begged to propose, 'the lord Provost and the city of Edinburgh.'

"Mr. Pat. Robertson gave 'Mrs. Henry Siddons, and success to the Theatre-Royal of Edinburgh.'

"Mr. Murray returned thanks for Mrs. Siddons.

"Sir Walter Scott here stated, that Mrs. Siddons wanted the means, but not the will, of beginning the Theatrical Fund. He here alluded to the great ability of Mr. Murray's management, and of his merits, which were of the first order, and of which every person who attends the theatre must be sensible; and, after alluding to the embarrassments with which the Theatre was threatened, he concluded by giving the health of Mr. Murray, which was drank with three times three.

"Mr. Murray—Gentlemen, I wish I could believe that, in any degree, I merited the compliments with which it has pleased sir Walter Scott to preface the proposal of my health, or the very flattering manner in which you have done me the honour to receive it. When, upon the death of my dear brother, the late Mr. Siddons, it was proposed that I should undertake the management of the Edinburgh theatre, I confess I drew back, doubting my capability to free it from the load of debt and difficulty with which it was surrounded. In this state of anxiety I solicited the advice of one who had ever honoured me with his kindest regard, and whose name no member of my profession can pronounce without feelings of the deepest respect and gratitude—I allude to the late Mr. John Kemble. (Great applause.) To him I applied; and with the repetition of his advice I shall cease to transgress upon your time. (Hear, hear.) 'My dear William, fear not; integrity and assiduity must prove an overmatch for all difficulty, and though I approve your not indulging a vain confidence in your own ability, and viewing with respectful apprehension the judgment of the audience you have to act before, yet be assured that judgment will ever be tempered by feeling that you are acting for the widow and fatherless.' (Loud applause.)

"Mr. J. Maconochie gave 'the health of Mrs. Siddons.'

"Sir W. Scott said, that if any thing could reconcile him to old age, it was the reflection that he had seen the rising as well as the setting sun of Mrs. Siddons. He remembered well their breakfasting near to the theatre—waiting the whole day—the crushing at the doors at six o'clock—and their going in and counting their fingers till seven o'clock. But the very first step, the very first word which she uttered, was sufficient to overpay him for all his labours. The house was literally electrified; and it was only from witnessing the effects of her genius, that he could guess to what a pitch theatrical excellence could be carried. Those young fellows who have only seen the setting sun of this distinguished performer, beautiful and serene as that was, must give us old fellows, who have seen its rise, leave to hold our heads a little higher.

"Mr. Mackay announced that the subscription for the night amounted to 280*l.*; and he expressed gratitude for this substantial proof of their kindness.

"Mr. Mackay here entertained the company with a pathetic song.

"Sir W. Scott apologized for having so long forgotten their native land. He would now give Scotland, the land of cakes. He would give every river, every loch, every hill, from Tweed to Johnnie Groat's house—every lass in her cottage and countess in her castle; and may her sons stand by her, as their fathers did before them, and he who would not drink a bumper to his toast, may he never drink whiskey more.

"Sir W. Scott—Gentlemen, I crave a bumper all over. The last toast reminds me of a neglect of duty. Unaccustomed to a public duty of this kind, errors in conducting the ceremonial of it may be excused, and omissions pardoned. Perhaps I have made one or two omissions in the course of the evening, for which I trust you will grant me your pardon and indulgence. One thing in particular I have omitted, and I would now wish to make amends for it by a libation of reverence and respect to the memory of Shakspeare. He was a man of universal genius, and from a period soon after his own era to the present day he has been universally idolized. When I come to his honoured name, I am like the sick man who hung up his crutches at the shrine, and was obliged to confess that he did not walk better than before. It is indeed difficult, gentlemen, to compare him to any other individual. The only one to whom I can at all compare him is the wonderful Arabian dervise, who dived into the body of each, and in that way became familiar with the thoughts and secrets of their hearts. He was a man of obscure origin, and as a player, limited in his acquirements. But he was born evidently with a universal genius. His eyes glanced at all the varied aspects of life, and his fancy portrayed with equal talents the king on the throne, and the clown who cracks his chestnuts at a Christmas fire. Whatever note he takes, he strikes it just and true, and awakens a corresponding chord in our own bosoms. Gentlemen, I propose 'the memory of William Shakspeare.'

"Glee, 'Lightly tread, 'tis hallow'd ground.'

"After the glee, sir Walter rose, and begged to propose as a toast the health of a lady, whose living merits are not a little honourable to Scotland. The toast (said he) is also flattering to the national vanity of a Scotchman, as the lady whom I intend to propose is a native of this country. From the public her works have met with the most favourable reception. One piece of hers, in particular, was often acted here of late years, and gave pleasure of no mean kind to many brilliant and fashionable audiences. In her private character, she (he begged leave to say) is as remarkable as in a public sense she is for her genius. In short, he would in one word name—'Joanna Baillie.'

"W. Menzies, esq., advocate, was sure that all present would cordially join him in drinking 'the health of Mr. Terry.'

"Sir W. Scott—'Mr. Baron Clerk—the court of exchequer.'

"Mr. Baron Clerk regretted the absence of his learned brother. None, he was sure, could be more generous in his nature, or ready to help a Scottish purpose.

"Sir W. Scott—There is one who ought to be remembered on this occasion. He is indeed well entitled to our great recollection—one, in short, to whom the drama in this city owes much. He succeeded, not without trouble, and perhaps at

some considerable sacrifice, in establishing a theatre. The younger part of the company may not recollect the theatre to which I allude; but there are some who with me may remember by name the theatre in Carrubber's Close. There Allan Ramsay established his little theatre. His own pastoral was not fit for the stage, but it has its own admirers in those who love the Dorie language in which it is written; and it is not without merits of a very peculiar kind. But, laying aside all considerations of his literary merit, Allan was a good jovial honest fellow, who could crack a bottle with the best. 'The memory of Allan Ramsay.'

"Mr. P. Robertson—I feel that I am about to tread on ticklish ground. The talk is of a new theatre, but wherever the new theatre may be erected, I trust we shall meet the old company.

"Sir Walter Scott—Wherever the new theatre is built, I hope it will not be large. There are two errors which we commonly commit—the one arising from our pride, the other from our poverty. If there are twelve plans, it is odds but the largest, without any regard to comfort, or an eye to the probable expense, is adopted. There was the college projected on this scale, and undertaken in the same manner, and who shall see the end of it? It has been building all my life, and may probably last during the lives of my children, and my children's children. Let it not be said, when we commence a new theatre, as was said on the occasion of laying the foundation stone of a certain building, 'behold the endless work begun.' Play-going folks should attend somewhat to convenience. The new theatre should, in the first place, be such as may be finished in eighteen months or two years; and, in the second place, it should be one in which we can hear our old friends with comfort. It is better that a theatre should be crowded now and then, than to have a large theatre, with benches continually empty, to the discouragement of the actors, and the discomfort of the spectators. (Applause.)

"Immediately afterwards he said, Gentlemen, it is now wearing late, and I shall request permission to retire. Like Partridge, I may say, '*non sum qualis eram.*' At my time of day, I can agree with lord Ogleby as to the rheumatism, and say, 'There's a twinge.' I hope, therefore, you will excuse me for leaving the chair. (The worthy baronet then retired, amid long, loud, and rapturous cheering.")

"When sir Walter had thus declared, à propos to nothing, that he was the man who had so long concealed his features under the mask of the author of Waverley, all the world stared, not so much at the unexpectedness of the disclosure, for it was virtually well-known before, but that the declaration should be made at that particular moment, when there appeared no reason for revealing the quasi secret. A document which we have lately seen, however, explains the circumstance, and puts to flight many sage conjectures. The unfortunate position of the affairs of Constable and Co., and of Ballantyne and Co., with the latter of which firms sir Walter Scott was connected, has rendered it necessary that their accounts should not only be looked into, but exposed to the creditors. The transactions recorded there show explicitly enough who was the author of Waverley;—we not only find sir Walter Scott receives payment for these works, but we find him stipulating for the purchase-money of works then unconceived, and of yielding up every stiver, or its worth, which he could command, but actually pledging future labours akin to former ones, for the liquidation of his debts. These, and a variety of other particulars are to be found in the excerpts of the sederunt book of the meetings of Messrs. Ballantyne's creditors, a copy of which has lately been in private circulation. Hence the sudden, and, it must be added, rather awkward avowal of the authorship on the part of sir Walter. As he was well aware that the circumstances would soon make their way through the press, he determined to catch at some little eclat, while yet there was time—some little credit for disclosing that himself, which all the world were soon to learn from others.

"These are items from the accounts.

'Value of sir Walter Scott's literary property.

'1. Copyright of published works, estimated at the rate obtained from Constable and Co. for similar works.*

St. Ronan's Well	1,300*l.*
Redgauntlet	1,300
Crusaders	2,000
	4,600*l.*

'2. Eventual rights to works sold to Constable and Co. for which bonds to the extent of 7,800*l.* are granted, but for reasons above stated, no value can be rated in this state.†

'3. Works in progress.‡ As none of these are completed, no value put on them at present beyond what is before stated as due to Ballantyne and Co. for printing works in progress, and on the value of Messrs. Constable and Co.'s paper on hand; but ultimately will be very valuable. See Appendix as to these works.

"In the debtor and creditor account of Constable and Co. with Ballantyne and Co., the following item occurs on the credit side:—Sums advanced by Constable and Co. to sir Walter Scott, being their two-third shares of sums stipulated to be paid in advance for two works of fiction not named, and not yet written, as per missives, dated 7th and 20th March, 1823.

"These works being undelivered, it is considered the author has an undoubted right to retain them,§ and impute the sums paid to account in the general balance owing to Constable and Co.

"In Appendix, No. II, being estimates of funds that may accrue to Ballantyne and Co. within a year, occur several curious particulars relative to Woodstock and the Life of Napoleon Bonaparte.

Produce of New Works by sir Walter Scott at present in the course of publication.

	L.	*s.*	*d.*
1. Woodstock, 3 volumes, 9,500; shop-price 31*s.* 6*d.* boards. . .	14,962	10	0
Deduct one-third, to reduce to trade-price, and cover expenses of sale	4,987	10	
Cost of paper and printing (same as Redgauntlet)	2,225	0	

* "This price is that given for the subsequent editions, after the first of 10,000."

† "It is a condition of these bonds, that if they are not paid, the copyrights revert to the author; so that, in spite of the failure of the granters, it is supposed they will be paid."

‡ "This alludes to the Life of Napoleon."

§ "Were the right the other way, it would be a very difficult matter to enforce it. An author of works of fiction is not to be delivered against his will; a legal process to force sir Walter Scott to produce a couple of novels, would be the Cæsarean operation in literature."

Sum to cover contingencies	1,000 0		
		8,212 10	0
Remains		6,750 0	0
Add value of copy-right, after first impression		1,300 0	0
Produce of Woodstock		8,050 0	0
2. Life of Napoleon Bonaparte, 5 vols. 8,000 copies, shop-price 52*s.* 6*d.* boards		21,000 0	0
Deduct one-third, as above	7,000 0		
Ditto for paper, &c. .	3,706 0		
Ditto contingencies .	1,200 0		
		11,906 0	0
		9,094 0	0
Add value of copy-right after first edition		2,166 13	4
Produce of Bonaparte's Life . .		11,260 13	4
3. Literary productions by sir Walter Scott already finished, but not yet published, though in the course of publication, which may be safely stated at		1,000 0	0

"At the second meeting of creditors, held 3d February, 1826, a resolution is entered, that the printing establishment should be continued, both as a source of profit, and as necessary for the publication of sir W. Scott's works; who had requested of Mr. Gibson to communicate, that he was to use every exertion in his power on behalf of the creditors; and by the diligent employment of his talents, and adoption of a strictly economical mode of life, to secure, as speedily as possible, full payment to all concerned.

"The cause of the delay in the publication of the Life of Napoleon will be found in the following minute:

"'The circumstances connected with the two literary works, entitled Woodstock, and the Life of Napoleon Bonaparte, having been considered; the trustees expressed their opinion, that so far as they understood the nature of the bargain between sir Walter Scott and Constable and Co., the latter had no claim in law for the proceeds of either of these books; but think it desirable for all parties that they should be finished, which should be communicated to sir Walter; and also, that he should be requested to give his aid to the sale of them to the best advantage.—Mr. Gibson was instructed to endeavour to concert some arrangement with Constable and Co. for consigning in some bank the price of the works, until all questions concerning them were decided.'

"On the 26th May, 1826, a meeting was held, when Mr. Gibson reported particulars of sale of Woodstock, 7,900 copies of which had been sold to Hurst and Robinson, at 6,500*l.*; but they being unable to complete the bargain, they had been transferred to Longman and Co. on same terms.

"The money had been paid, and was deposited with sir W. Forbes and Co. to wait the issue of the decision as to the respective claims of Constable and Co. and sir W. Scott's trustees, regarding this work. The remainder of the impression had been sold to Constable and Co.'s trustee at 18*s.* 6*d.* each copy, 'at a credit of ten months from delivery, with five per cent. discount for any earlier payment,' of which the trustees approved. In consequence of advice from sir Walter Scott and Longman and Co., it had been thought advisable to restrict the first edition of the Life of Napoleon to 6,000, instead of 8,000 copies, as originally intended.

"The excerpts contain a great number of items, which lay open the precise state of sir Walter's private affairs: a hundred years hence they may be a great curiosity, and their publication may then be correct: at present it would certainly be indelicate and unhandsome, not only to the admirable writer himself, but also to several other private individuals. Every thing belonging to a great national genius is public property, and in the course of a short time these excerpts will be sought for with avidity, and published with as little hesitation as Mr. Todd lately printed Milton's pecuniary squabbles with his mother-in-law."

The last, but not the "last *best* work" of sir Walter Scott, is his LIFE OF NAPOLEON BONAPARTE, a production of which neither our limits, nor our inclinations, will allow us to say much. In an historical point of view it possesses few merits, and, we are constrained to admit, is equally unworthy of the extraordinary character it treats of, as of its author's splendid literary reputation. The extent and importance of the subject were calculated to afford an ample scope for the display of the very highest ability. A more exciting theme of narration—a fairer field of philosophical contemplation, was never before given to kindle the eloquence, to exercise the wisdom and skill, or to stimulate the intellectual ambition of the historian. Yet, notwithstanding the unquestionable powers of the celebrated author—notwithstanding the fame which he had "set upon the east"—the magnitude of the occasion, and all the inspiring circumstances of the undertaking, it would be vain to deny that the work, upon the whole, is a failure. The book has, evidently, been written in haste and with negligence; the author has given himself no time either for the well-digested arrangement of facts, or profound reflection on the great combinations of political action. He has not, in simple language, studied his subject; but has put together an immense mass of materials, as rapidly as they accumulated under his hands, with little care in the selection, and no thought for their relative importance and measurement. It is, in short, a voluminous compilation, executed indeed with wonderful celerity, and adorned with brilliant passages, but nothing worthy either of the genius of Walter Scott or the true dignity of history. But the real cause of his failure in writing the history of our eventful times must not be traced either to ignorance or incapacity. It is too visible that lower considerations than the generous love of fame inspired the author. Hence, only, the haste, the negligence, the prolixity of the composition, the want of compression, of reviewing, of deliberate arrangement.—At the same time, we should be guilty of great injustice if we failed to remark the extraordinary skill displayed by sir Walter Scott in the relation of military events. Not only are the shifting alarums of the battle-field exhibited with all the eager animation, all the picturesque and dramatic energy of description, which were to

be looked for from the "author of Waverley," but the plans of campaign, and the movements of armies, are explained in a clear and methodical style, which evinces a perfect acquaintance with the principles of strategy.—Finally, of the third volume we are bound to speak in terms of unqualified commendation. It forms the most exciting and delightful fragment of heroic biography with which we are acquainted.*

* It is with much regret that we feel ourselves obliged to notice an unpleasant epistolary discussion, which has arisen between general Gourgaud and sir Walter Scott in consequence of some passages in the latter's "Life of Napoleon," in which the general's fidelity to his late exiled master is more than called in question. To this charge the general, in a long letter inserted in the Paris journals, has given the "lie direct," and termed the whole work a romance. Sir Walter has since published a spirited reply in the English newspapers, and produced copies of the official documents, &c. on which the passages in discussion were founded.

THE POETICAL WORKS

OF

SIR WALTER SCOTT

The Lay of the Last Minstrel.

Dum relego, scripsisse, pudet, quia plurima cerno,
Me quoque, qui feci, judice, digna lini.

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE CHARLES, EARL OF DALKEITH,

THIS POEM IS INSCRIBED, BY THE AUTHOR.

THE Poem, now offered to the public, is intended to illustrate the customs and manners, which anciently prevailed on the Borders of England and Scotland. The inhabitants, living in a state partly pastoral and partly warlike, and combining habits of constant depredation with the influence of a rude spirit of chivalry, were often engaged in scenes, highly susceptible of poetical ornament. As the description of scenery and manners was more the object of the author, than a combined and regular narrative, the plan of the ancient Metrical Romance was adopted, which allows greater latitude in this respect, than would be consistent with the dignity of a regular Poem. The same model offered other facilities, as it permits an occasional alteration of measure, which, in some degree, authorizes the change of rhythm in the text. The machinery also, adopted from popular belief, would have seemed puerile in a poem, which did not partake of the rudeness of the old Ballad, or Metrical Romance.

For these reasons, the Poem was put into the mouth of an ancient Minstrel, the last of the race, who, as he is supposed to have survived the Revolution, might have caught somewhat of the refinement of modern poetry, without losing the simplicity of his original model. The date of the Tale itself is about the middle of the sixteenth century, when most of the parsonages actually flourished. The time occupied by the action is three nights and three days.

INTRODUCTION.

THE way was long, the wind was cold,
The minstrel was infirm and old;
His withered cheek, and tresses gray,
Seemed to have known a better day;
The harp, his sole remaining joy,
Was carried by an orphan boy.
The last of all the bards was he,
Who sung of Border chivalry;
For, well-a-day! their date was fled,
His tuneful brethren all were dead;
And he, neglected and oppressed,
Wished to be with them, and at rest.
No more, on prancing palfrey borne,
He carolled, light as lark at morn;
No longer courted and caressed,
High placed in hall, a welcome guest,
He poured, to lord and lady gay,
The unpremeditated lay:
Old times were changed, old manners gone;
A stranger filled the Stuart's throne;
The bigots of the iron time
Had called his harmless art a crime.
A wandering Harper, scorned and poor,
He begged his bread from door to door;
And tuned, to please a peasant's ear,
The harp a king had loved to hear.

He passed where Newark's stately tower
Looks out from Yarrow's birchen bower:
The minstrel gazed with wishful eye—
No humbler resting-place was nigh.
With hesitating step, at last,
The embattled portal-arch he passed,
Whose ponderous grate and massy bar
Had oft rolled back the tide of war,
But never closed the iron door
Against the desolate and poor.

The duchess* marked his weary pace,
His timid mien, and reverend face,
And bade her page the menials tell,
That they should tend the old man well:
For she had known adversity,
Though born in such a high degree;
In pride of power, in beauty's bloom,
Had wept o'er Monmouth's bloody tomb.
When kindness had his wants supplied,
And the old man was gratified,
Began to rise his minstrel pride:
And he began to talk anon,
Of good earl Francis,† dead and gone,
And of earl Walter,‡ rest him God!
A braver ne'er to battle rode:
And how full many a tale he knew
Of the old warriors of Buccleuch;
And, would the noble duchess deign
To listen to an old man's strain,
Though stiff his hand, his voice though weak,
He thought, even yet, the sooth to speak,
That if she loved the harp to hear,
He could make music to her ear.

The humble boon was soon obtained;
The Aged Minstrel audience gained.
But, when he reached the room of state,
Where she, with all her ladies, sate,
Perchance he wished his boon denied:
For, when to tune his harp he tried,
His trembling hand had lost the ease,
Which marks security to please;
And scenes, long past, of joy and pain,
Came wildering o'er his aged brain—
He tried to tune his harp in vain.
The pitying duchess praised its chime,
And gave him heart, and gave him time,
Till every string's according glee
Was blended into harmony.
And then, he said, he would full fain
He could recall an ancient strain,
He never thought to sing again.
It was not framed for village churls,
But for high dames and mighty earls;
He had played it to king Charles the Good,
When he kept court in Holyrood;
And much he wished, yet feared, to try
The long forgotten melody.
Amid the strings his fingers strayed,
And an uncertain warbling made,
And oft he shook his hoary head.
But when he caught the measure wild,
The old man raised his face and smiled;
And lightened up his faded eye,
With all a poet's ecstasy!
In varying cadence, soft or strong,
He swept the sounding chords along:
The present scene, the future lot,
His toils, his wants, were all forgot;
Cold diffidence, and age's frost,
In the full tide of song were lost;
Each blank, in faithless memory void,
The poet's glowing thought supplied;
And, while his harp responsive rung,
'Twas thus the LATEST MINSTREL sung.

* Anne, duchess of Buccleuch and Monmouth, representative of the ancient lords of Buccleuch, and widow of the unfortunate James, duke of Monmouth, who was beheaded in 1685.

† Francis Scott, earl of Buccleuch, father to the duchess.

‡ Walter, earl of Buccleuch, grandfather to the duchess, and a celebrated warrior.

THE

LAY OF THE LAST MINSTREL.

CANTO I.

I.

THE feast was over in Branksome tower,[1]
And the Ladye had gone to her secret bower;
Her bow'r that was guarded by word and by spell,
Deadly to hear, and deadly to tell—
Jesu Maria, shield us well!
No living wight, save the Ladye alone,
Had dared to cross the threshold stone.

II.

The tables were drawn, it was idlesse all;
Knight, and page, and household squire,
Loitered through the lofty hall,
Or crowded round the ample fire:
The stag hounds, weary with the chase,
Lay stretched upon the rushy floor,
And urged, in dreams, the forest-race,
From Teviotstone to Eskdale-moor.

III.

Nine-and-twenty knights of fame
Hung their shields in Branksome hall;[2]
Nine-and-twenty squires of name
Brought them their steeds from bower to stall;
Nine-and-twenty yeomen tall
Waited, duteous, on them all:
They were all knights of metal true,
Kinsmen to the bold Buccleuch.

IV.

Ten of them were sheathed in steel,
With belted sword, and spur on heel:
They quitted not their harness bright,
Neither by day, nor yet by night:
They lay down to rest,
With corselet laced,
Pillowed on buckler cold and hard;
They carved at the meal
With gloves of steel,
And they drank the red wine through the helmet barred.

V.

Ten squires, ten yeomen, mailclad men,
Waited the beck of the warders ten;
Thirty steeds, both fleet and wight,
Stood saddled in stable day and night,
Barbed with frontlet of steel, I trow,
And with Jedwood axe at saddle bow.[3]
A hundred more fed free in stall:
Such was the custom of Branksome hall.

VI.

Why do these steeds stand ready dight?
Why watch these warriors, armed, by night?
They watch to hear the bloodhound baying;
They watch, to hear the warhorn braying;
To see Saint George's red cross streaming;
To see the midnight beacon gleaming;
They watch, against Southern force and guile,
Lest Scroope, or Howard, or Percy's powers,
Threaten Branksome's lordly towers,
From Warkworth, or Naworth, or merry Carlisle.[4]

VII.

Such is the custom of Branksome hall.—
Many a valiant knight is here;
But he, the chieftain of them all,
His sword hangs rusting on the wall
Beside his broken spear.

Bards long shall tell,
How lord Walter fell![5]
When startled burghers fled, afar,
The furies of the border war;
When the streets of high Dunedin
Saw lances gleam, and falchions redden,
And heard the slogan's* deadly yell—
Then the chief of Branksome fell.

VIII.

Can piety the discord heal,
Or stanch the death-feud's enmity?
Can christian lore, can patriot zeal,
Can love of blessed charity?
No! vainly to each holy shrine,
In mutual pilgrimage they drew,[6]
Implored, in vain, the grace divine
For chiefs their own red falchions slew;
While Cessford owns the rule of Car,[7]
While Ettrick boasts the line of Scott,
The slaughtered chiefs, the mortal jar,
The havoc of the feudal war,
Shall never, never be forgot!

IX.

In sorrow o'er lord Walter's bier
The warlike foresters had bent;
And many a flower, and many a tear,
Old Teviot's maids and matrons lent;
But o'er her warrior's bloody bier
The Ladye dropped nor flower nor tear!
Vengeance, deep brooding o'er the slain,
Had locked the source of softer wo;
And burning pride, and high disdain,
Forbade the rising tear to flow;
Until, amid his sorrowing clan,
Her son lisped from the nurse's knee—
And if I live to be a man,
"My father's death revenged shall be!"
Then, fast the mother's tears did seek
To dew the infant's kindling cheek.

X.

All loose her negligent attire,
All loose her golden hair,
Hung Margaret o'er her slaughtered sire,
And wept in wild despair.
But not alone the bitter tear
Had filial grief supplied;
For hopeless love, and anxious fear,
Had lent their mingled tide:
Nor in her mother's altered eye
Dared she to look for sympathy.
Her lover, 'gainst her father's clan,
With Car in arms had stood,
When Mathouse-burn to Melrose ran
All purple with their blood;
And well she knew, her mother dread,
Before lord Cranstoun she should wed,[8]
Would see her on her dying bed.

XI.

Of noble race the Ladye came;
Her father was a clerk of fame,
Of Bethune's line of Picardie;[9]
He learned the art that none may name,
In Padua, far beyond the sea.[10]
Men said he changed his mortal frame
By feat of magic mystery;
For when, in studious mood, he paced
Saint Andrew's cloistered hall,
His form no darkening shadow traced
Upon the sunny wall![11]

XII.

And of his skill, as bards avow,
He taught that Ladye fair,
Till to her bidding she could bow
The viewless forms of air.[12]
And how she sits in secret bower,
In old lord David's western tower,
And listens to a heavy sound,
That moans the mossy turrets round.
Is it the roar of Teviot's tide,
That chafes against the scaur's* red side?
Is it the wind that swings the oaks?
Is it the echo from the rocks?
What may it be, the heavy sound,
That moans old Branksome's turrets round?

XIII.

At the sullen, moaning sound,
The bandogs bay and howl;
And, from the turrets round,
Loud whoops the startled owl.
In the hall, both squire and knight
Swore that a storm was near,
And looked forth to view the night;
But the night was still and clear!

XIV.

From the sound of Teviot's tide,
Chafing with the mountain's side,
From the groan of the windswung oak,
From the sullen echo of the rock,
From the voice of the coming storm,
The Ladye knew it well!
It was the Spirit of the Flood that spoke,
And he called on the Spirit of the Fell.

XV.

RIVER SPIRIT.

"Sleep'st thou, brother?"

MOUNTAIN SPIRIT.

....."Brother, nay—
On my hills the moon-beams play.
From Craig-cross to Skelfhillpen,
By every rill, in every glen,
Merry elves their morrice pacing,
To aerial minstrelsy,
Emerald rings on brown heath tracing,
Trip it deft and merrily.
Up, and mark their nimble feet!
Up, and list their music sweet!"

XVI.

RIVER SPIRIT.

"Tears of an imprisoned maiden
Mix with my polluted stream;
Margaret of Branksome, sorrow laden,
Mourns beneath the moon's pale beam.
Tell me, thou, who view'st the stars,
When shall cease these feudal jars?
What shall be the maiden's fate?
Who shall be the maiden's mate?"

XVII.

MOUNTAIN SPIRIT.

"Arthur's slow wain his course doth roll
In utter darkness round the pole;
The Northern Bear lowers black and grim;
Orion's studded belt is dim:
Twinkling faint, and distant far,
Shimmers through mist each planet star;
Ill may I read their high decree!
But no kind influence deign they shower
On Teviot's tide, and Branksome's tower,
Till pride be quelled, and love be free."

* The war cry, or gathering word, of a Border clan.

* *Scaur*, a precipitous bank of earth.

XVIII.

The unearthly voices ceased,
And the heavy sound was still;
It died on the river's breast,
It died on the side of the hill.
But round lord David's tower
The sound still floated near;
For it rung in the Ladye's bower,
And it rung in the Ladye's ear.
She raised her stately head,
And her heart throbbed high with pride:—
"Your mountains shall bend,
And your streams ascend,
Ere Margaret be our foeman's bride!"

XIX.

The Ladye sought the lofty hall,
Where many a bold retainer lay,
And, with joeund din, among them all,
Her son pursued his infant play.
A fancied mosstrooper,[13] the boy
The truncheon of a spear bestrode,
And round the hall, right merrily,
In mimic foray* rode.
Even bearded knights, in arms grown old,
Share in his frolic gambols bore,
Albeit their hearts, of rugged mould,
Were stubborn as the steel they wore.
For the gray warriors prophesied,
How the brave boy, in future war,
Should tame the unicorn's pride,
Exalt the crescent, and the star.[14]

XX.

The ladye forgot her purpose high,
One moment, and no more;
One moment gazed with a mother's eye,
As she paused at the arched door;
Then, from amid the armed train,
She called to her William of Deloraine.[15]

XXI.

A stark mosstrooping Scott was he,
As e'er couched border lance by knee;
Through Solway sands, through Tarras moss,
Blindfold he knew the paths to cross;
By wily turns, by desperate bounds,
Had baffled Percy's best bloodhounds;[16]
In Eske, or Liddel, fords were none,
But he would ride them, one by one;
Alike to him was time, or tide,
December's snow, or July's pride;
Alike to him was tide, or time,
Moonless midnight, or matin prime:
Steady of heart, and stout of hand,
As ever drove prey from Cumberland;
Five times outlawed had he been,
By England's king and Scotland's queen.

XXII.

"Sir William of Deloraine, good at need,
Mount thee on the wightest steed;
Spare not to spur, nor stint to ride,
Until you come to fair Tweed side;
And in Melrose's holy pile
Seek thou the monk of St. Mary's aisle.
Greet the father well from me;
Say, that the fated hour is come,
And to-night he shall watch with thee,
To win the treasure of the tomb:—
For this will be Saint Michael's night,
And, though stars be dim, the moon is bright;
And the cross, of bloody red,
Will point to the grave of the mighty dead.

XXIII.

"What he gives thee, see thou keep;
Stay not thou for food or sleep:
Be it scroll or be it book;
Into it, knight, thou must not look;
If thou readest, thou art lorn!
Better thou hadst ne'er been born."

XXIV.

"O swiftly can speed my dapplegray steed,
Which drinks of the Teviot clear;
Ere break of day," the warrior 'gan say,
"Again will I be here:
And safer by none may thy errand be done,
Than, noble dame, by me;
Letter nor line know I never a one,
Wer't my neck-verse at Haribee."*

XXV.

Soon in his saddle sate he fast,
And soon the deep descent he passed,
Soon crossed the sounding barbican,†
And soon the Teviot's side he won.
Eastward the wooded path he rode,
Green hazels o'er his basnet nod:
He passed the Peel‡ of Goldiland,
And crossed old Borthwick's roaring strand:
Dimly he viewed the moathill's mound,[17]
Where Druid shades still flitted round:
In Hawick twinkled many a light;
Behind him soon they set in night;
And soon he spurred his courser keen
Beneath the tower of Hazeldean.[18]

XXVI.

The clattering hoofs the watchmen mark;
"Stand, ho! thou courier of the dark."
"For Branksome, ho!" the knight rejoined
And left the friendly tower behind.
He turned him now from Teviot side,
And, guided by the tinkling rill,
Northward the dark ascent did ride,
And gained the moor at Horslie hill;
Broad on the left before him lay,
For many a mile the Roman way.§

XXVII.

A moment now he slacked his speed,
A moment breathed his panting steed;
Drew saddle-girth and corslet-band,
And loosened in the sheath his brand.
On Minto-crags the moonbeams glint,[19]
Where Barnhill hewed his bed of flint;
Who flung his outlawed limbs to rest,
Where falcons hang their giddy nest,
Mid cliffs, from whence his eagle eye,
For many a league, his prey could spy;
Cliffs doubling, on their echoes borne,
The terrors of the robber's horn;
Cliffs, which, for many a later year,
The warbling Doric reed shall hear,
When some sad swain shall teach the grove,
Ambition is no cure for love.

* *Foray*, a predatory inroad.

* *Haribee*, the place of executing the Border marauders at Carlisle. The *neck-verse* is the beginning of the fifty-first psalm, *Miserere mei*, &c. anciently read by criminals, claiming the benefit of clergy.

† *Barbican*, the defence of the outer gate of a feudal castle.

‡ *Peel*, a Border tower.

§ An ancient Roman road, crossing through part of Roxburghshire.

XXVIII.

Unchallenged, thence past Deloraine
To ancient Riddell's fair domain,[20]
Where Aill, from mountains freed,
Down from the lakes did raving come,
Cresting each wave with tawny foam,
Like the mane of a chestnut steed.
In vain! no torrent, deep or broad,
Might bar the bold mosstrooper's road.

XXIX.

At the first plunge the horse sunk low,
And the water broke o'er the saddle-bow:
Above the foaming tide, I ween,
Scarce half the charger's neck was seen;
For he was barded* from counter to tail,
And the rider was armed complete in mail;
Never heavier man and horse
Stemmed a midnight torrent's force.
The warrior's very plume, I say,
Was daggled by the dashing spray;
Yet, through good heart, and our Ladye's grace,
At length he gained the landing place.

XXX.

Now Bowden moor the marchman won,
And sternly shook his plumed head,
As glanced his eye o'er Halidon,[21]
For on his soul the slaughter red
Of that unhallowed morn arose,
When first the Scott and Car were foes;
When royal James beheld the fray,
Prize to the victor of the day;
When Home and Douglas, in the van,
Bore down Buccleuch's retiring clan,
Till gallant Cessford's heartblood dear
Reeked on dark Elliot's border spear.

XXXI.

In bitter mood he spurred fast,
And soon the hated heath was past;
And far beneath, in lustre wan,
Old Melros' rose, and fair Tweed ran;[22]
Like some tall rock, with lichens gray,
Rose, dimly huge, the dark abbaye.
When Hawick he passed, had curfew rung,
Now midnight lauds† were in Melrose sung.
The sound, upon the fitful gale,
In solemn wise did rise and fail,
Like that wild harp, whose magic tone
Is wakened by the winds alone.
But when Melrose he reached, 'twas silence all;
He meetly stabled his steed in stall,
And sought the convent's lonely wall.

—

Here paused the harp; and with its swell
The master's fire, and courage fell:
Dejectedly, and low, he bowed,
And, gazing timid on the crowd,
He seemed to seek, in every eye,
If they approved his minstrelsy:
And, diffident of present praise,
Somewhat he spoke of former days,
And how old age, and wandering long,
Had done his hand and harp some wrong.
The duchess and her daughters fair,
And every gentle ladye there,
Each after each, in due degree,
Gave praises to his melody;
His hand was true, his voice was clear,
And much they longed the rest to hear.
Encouraged thus, the Aged Man,
After meet rest, again began.

* *Barded*, or barbed, applied to a horse accoutred with defensive armour.

†*Lauds*, the midnight service of the Catholic church.

—

CANTO II.

I.

If thou would'st view fair Melrose aright,
Go visit it by the pale moonlight;
For the gay beams of lightsome day
Gild, but to flout, the ruins gray.
When the broken arches are black in night,
And each shafted oriel glimmers white;
When the cold light's uncertain shower
Streams on the ruined central tower:
When buttress and buttress, alternately,
Seemed framed of ebon and ivory:
When silver edges the imagery,
And the scrolls that teach thee to live and die!;
When distant Tweed is heard to rave,
And the owlet to hoot o'er the dead man's grave,
Then go—but go alone the while—
Then view Saint David's ruined pile;
And, home returning, soothly swear,
Was never scene so sad and fair!

II.

Short halt did Deloraine make there;
Little recked he of the scene so fair:
With dagger's hilt, on the wicket strong,
He struck full loud, and struck full long.
The porter hurried to the gate—
"Who knocks so loud, and knocks so late?"
"From Branksome I," the warrior cried;
And straight the wicket opened wide:
For Branksome's chiefs had in battle stood,
To fence the rights of fair Melrose;
And lands and livings, many a rood,
Had gifted the shrine for their soul's repose.

III.

Bold Deloraine his errand said;
The porter bent his humble head;
With torch in hand, and feet unshod,
And noiseless step, the path he trod;
The arched cloisters, far and wide,
Rang to the warrior's clanking stride;
Till, stooping low his lofty crest,
He entered the cell of the ancient priest,
And lifted his barred aventayle,*
To hail the monk of Saint Mary's aisle.

IV.

"The Ladye of Branksome greets thee by me;
Says, that the fated hour is come,
And that to-night I shall watch with thee,
To win the treasure of the tomb."
From sackcloth couch the monk arose,
With toil his stiffened limbs he reared;
A hundred years had flung their snows
On his thin locks and floating beard.

V.

And strangely on the knight looked he,
And his blue eyes gleamed wild and wide;
"And, darest thou, warrior! seek to see
What heaven and hell alike would hide?
My breast, in belt of iron pent,
With shirt of hair and scourge of thorn:
For three-score years, in penance spent,
My knees those flinty stones have worn;
Yet all too little to atone
For knowing what should n'er be known.

* *Aventayle*, visor of the helmet.

Would'st thou thy every future year
In ceaseless prayer and penance drie,
Yet wait thy latter end with fear—
Then, daring warrior, follow me!"

VI.

"Penance, father, will I none;
Prayer know I hardly one;
For mass or prayer can I rarely tarry,
Save to patter an Ave Mary,
When I ride on a Border foray:[4]
Other prayer can I none;
So speed me my errand, and let me be gone."

VII.

Again on the knight looked the churchman old,
And again he sighed heavily;
For he had himself been a warrior bold,
And fought in Spain and Italy.
And he tho't on the days that were long since by,
When his limbs were strong, and his courage was high:—
Now, slow and faint, he led the way,
Where, cloistered round, the garden lay:
The pillard arches were over their head,
And beneath their feet were the bones of the dead.[5]

VIII.

Spreading herbs, and flow'rets bright,
Glistened with the dew of night;
Nor herb, nor flow'ret, glistened there,
But was carved in the cloister'd arches as fair.
The monk gazed long on the lovely moon,
Then into the night he looked forth;
And red and bright the streamers light
Were dancing in the glowing north.
So had he seen, in fair Castile,
The youth in glittering squadrons start;
Sudden the flying gennet wheel,
And hurl the unexpected dart.[6]
He knew, by the streamers that shot so bright,
That spirits were riding the northern light.

IX.

By a steel-clenched postern door,
They entered now the chancel tall:
The darkened roof rose high aloof
On pillars, lofty, and light, and small;
The keystone, that locked each ribbed aisle,
Was a fleur-de-lys, or a quatre-feuille:
The corbells* were carved grotesque and grim;
And the pillars, with clustered shafts so trim,
With base and with capital flourished around,
Seemed bundles of lances which garlands had bound.

X.

Full many a scutcheon and banner, riven,
Shook to the cold nightwind of heaven,
Around the screened altar's pale;
And there the dying lamps did burn,
Before thy low and lonely urn,
O gallant chief of Otterburne![7]
And thine, dark knight of Liddesdale![8]
O fading honours of the dead!
O high ambition, lowly laid!

XI.

The moon on the east oriel shone[9]
Through slender shafts of shapely stone,
By foliaged tracery combined:
Thou would'st have thought some fairy's hand
'Twixt poplars straight the osier wand,
In many a freakish knot, had twined;
Then framed a spell, when the work was done,
And changed the willow wreaths to stone.
The silver light, so pale and faint,
Showed many a prophet, and many a saint,
Whose image on the glass was died;
Full in the midst, his cross of red
Triumphant Michael brandished,
And trampled the apostate's pride.
The moonbeam kissed the holy pane,
And threw on the pavement a bloody stain.

XII.

They sate them down on a marble stone;
(A Scottish monarch slept below;)[10]
Thus spoke the monk, in solemn tone;
"I was not always a man of wo;
For Paynim countries I have trod,
And fought beneath the cross of God:
Now, strange to my eyes thine arms appear,
And their iron clang sounds strange to my ear.

XIII.

"In these far climes, it was my lot
To meet the wondrous Michael Scott;[11]
A wizard of such dreaded fame,
That when, in Salamanca's cave,[12]
Him listed his magic wand to wave,
The bells would ring in Notre Dame![13]
Some of his skill he taught to me;
And, warrior, I could say to thee
The words that cleft Eildon hills in three,
And bridled the Tweed with a curb of stone;[14]
But to speak them were a deadly sin;
And for having but thought them my heart within,
A treble penance must be done.

XIV.

"When Michael lay on his dying bed,
His conscience was awakened;
He bethought him of his sinful deed,
And he gave me a sign to come with speed;
I was in Spain when the morning rose,
But I stood by his bed ere evening close.
The words may not again be said,
That he spoke to me, on death-bed laid:
They would rend this abbaye's massy nave,
And pile it in heaps above his grave.

XV.

"I swore to bury his mighty book,
That never mortal might therein look;
And never to tell where it was hid,
Save at the chief of Branksome's need:
And when that need was past and o'er,
Again the volume to restore.
I buried him on Saint Michael's night,
When the bell tolled one, and the moon was bright;
And I dug his chamber among the dead,
When the floor of the chancel was stained red,
That his patron's cross might over him wave,
And scare the fiends from the wizard's grave.

XVI.

"It was a night of wo and dread,
When Michael in the tomb I laid!
Strange sounds along the chancel past;
The banners waved without a blast:"—
—Still spoke the monk, when the bell tolled one!
I tell you, that a braver man
Than William of Deloraine, good at need,
Against a foe ne'er spurred a steed;
Yet somewhat was he chilled with dread,
And his hair did bristle upon his head.

* *Corbells*, the projections from which the arches spring, usually cut in a fantastic face or mask.

XVII.

"Lo, warrior! now, the cross of red
Points to the grave of the mighty dead;
Within it burns a wondrous light,
To chase the spirits that love the night;
That lamp shall burn unquenchably,[15]
Until the eternal doom shall be."
Slow moved the monk to the broad flag-stone,
Which the bloody cross was traced upon;
He pointed to a secret nook;
An iron bar the warrior took;
And the monk made a sign with his withered hand,
The grave's huge portal to expand.

XVIII.

With beating heart, to the task he went;
His sinewy frame o'er the grave-stone bent;
With bar of iron heaved amain,
Till the toil drops fell from his brows, like rain.
It was by dint of passing strength,
That he moved the massy stone at length.
I would you had been there, to see
How the light broke forth so gloriously,
Streamed upward to the chancel roof,
And through the galleries far aloof!
No earthly flame blazed e'er so bright;
It shone like heaven's own blessed light;
And, issuing from the tomb,
Showed the monk's cowl and visage pale,
Danced on the dark-browed warrior's mail,
And kissed his waving plume.

XIX.

Before their eyes the wizard lay,
As if he had not been dead a day.
His hoary beard in silver rolled,
He seemed some seventy winters old;
A palmer's amice wrapped him round,
With a wrought Spanish baldrie bound,
Like a pilgrim from beyond the sea;
His left hand held his book of might;
A silver cross was in his right;
The lamp was placed beside his knee:
High and majestic was his look;
At which the fellest fiends had shook,
And all unruffled was his face—
They trusted his soul had gotten grace.

XX.

Often had William of Deloraine
Rode through the battle's bloody plain,
And trampled down the warriors slain,
And neither known remorse nor awe;
Yet now remorse and awe he owned:
His breath came thick, his head swam round,
When this strange scene of death he saw.
Bewildered and unnerved he stood,
And the priest prayed fervently, and loud:
With eyes averted, prayed he;
He might not endure the sight to see,
Of the man he had loved so brotherly.

XXI.

And when the priest his death-prayer had pray'd,
Thus unto Deloraine he said;—
"Now, speed thee what thou hast to do,
Or, warrior, we may dearly rue;
For those, thou may'st not look upon,
Are gathering fast round the yawning stone!"—
Then Deloraine, in terror, took
From the cold hand the mighty book,
With iron clasped, and with iron bound;
He tho't, as he took it, the dead man frown'd:[16]
But the glare of the sepulchral light,
Perchance, had dazzled the warrior's sight.

XXII.

When the huge stone sunk o'er the tomb,
The night returned in double gloom;
For the moon had gone down, and the stars were few:
And, as the knight and priest withdrew,
With wavering steps and dizzy brain,
They hardly might the postern gain.
'Tis said, as through the aisles they passed,
They heard strange noises on the blast;
And through the cloister-galleries small,
Which at midheight thread the chancel wall,
Loud sobs, and laughter louder, ran,
And voices unlike the voice of man;
As if the fiends kept holiday,
Because these spells were brought to day.
I cannot tell how the truth may be;
I say the tale as 'twas said to me.

XXIII.

"Now, hie thee hence," the father said;
"And, when we are on death-bed laid,
O may our dear Ladye, and sweet Saint John,
Forgive our souls for the deed we have done!"
The monk returned him to his cell,
And many a prayer and penance sped;
When the convent met at the noontide bell,
The monk of Saint Mary's aisle was dead!
Before the cross was the body laid,
With hands clasped fast, as if still he prayed.

XXIV.

The knight breathed free in the morning wind,
And strove his hardihood to find;
He was glad when he passed the tombstones gray,
Which girdle round the fair Abbaye;
For the mystic book, to his bosom prest,
Felt like a load upon his breast;
And his joints, with nerves of iron twined,
Shook, like the aspen leaves in wind.
Full fain was he when the dawn of day
Began to brighten Cheviot gray;
He joyed to see the cheerful light,
And he said Ave Mary, as well as he might.

XXV.

The sun had brightened Cheviot gray,
The sun had brightened the Carter's* side;
And soon beneath the rising day
Smiled Branksome towers and Teviot tide.
The wild birds told their warbling tale;
And awakened every flower that blows;
And peeped forth the violet pale,
And spread her breast the mountain rose:
And lovelier than the rose so red,
Yet paler than the violet pale,
She early left her sleepless bed,
The fairest maid of Teviotdale.

XXVI.

Why does fair Margaret so early awake,
And don her kirtle so hastilie:
And the silken knots, which in hurry she would make,
Why tremble her slender fingers to tie?
Why does she stop, and look often around,
As she glides down the secret stair;
And why does she pat the shaggy blood-hound,
As he rouses him up from his lair:

* A mountain on the border of England, above Jedburgh.

And, though she passes the postern alone,
Why is not the watchman's bugle blown?

XXVII.

The Ladye steps in doubt and dread,
Lest her watchful mother hear her tread;
The Ladye caresses the rough blood-hound,
Lest his voice should waken the castle round;
The watchman's bugle is not blown,
For he was her foster-father's son;
And she glides through the greenwood at dawn of light,
To meet baron Henry, her own true knight.

XXVIII.

The knight and ladye fair are met,
And under the hawthorn's boughs are set.
A fairer pair were never seen
To meet beneath the hawthorn green.
He was stately, and young, and tall,
Dreaded in battle, and loved in hall:
And she, when love, scarce told, scarce hid,
Lent to her cheek a livelier red;
When the half sigh her swelling breast
Against the silken riband prest;
When her blue eyes their secret told,
Though shaded by her locks of gold,—
Where would you find the peerless fair
With Margaret of Branksome might compare!

XXIX.

And now, fair dames, methinks I see
You listen to my minstrelsy:
Your waving locks ye backward throw,
And sidelong bend your necks of snow:
Ye ween to hear a melting tale
Of two true lovers in a dale;
And how the knight, with tender fire,
To paint his faithful passion strove;
Swore, he might at her feet expire,
But never, never cease to love;
And how she blushed, and how she sighed,
And, half consenting, half denied,
And said that she would die a maid;
Yet, might the bloody feud be stayed,
Henry of Cranstoun, and only he,
Margaret of Branksome's choice should be.

XXX.

Alas! fair dames, your hopes are vain!
My harp has lost the enchanting strain;
Its lightness would my age reprove:
My hairs are gray, my limbs are old,
My heart is dead, my veins are cold;—
I may not, must not, sing of love.

XXXI.

Beneath an oak, mossed o'er by eld,
The baron's dwarf his courser held,[17]
And held his crested helm and spear:
That dwarf was scarce an earthly man,
If the tales were true, that of him ran
Through all the Border, far and near.
'Twas said, when the baron a hunting rode,
Through Redesdale's glens, but rarely trod,
He heard a voice cry, "Lost! lost! lost!"
And, like tennisball by racquet tost,
A leap, of thirty feet and three,
Made from the gorse this elfin shape,
Distorted like some dwarfish ape,
And lighted at lord Cranstoun's knee.
Lord Cranstoun was somewhit dismayed;
'Tis said that five good miles he rade,
To rid him of his company;
But where he rode one mile, the dwarf ran four,
And the dwarf was first at the castle door.

XXXII.

Use lessens marvel, it is said:
This elfish dwarf with the baron staid;
Little he ate, and less he spoke,
Nor mingled with the menial flock:
And oft apart his arms he tossed,
And often muttered, "Lost! lost! lost!"
He was waspish, arch, and litherlie,
But well lord Cranstoun served he;
And he of his service was full fain;
For once he had been ta'en or slain,
An' had it not been his ministry.
All, between Home and Hermitage,
Talked of lord Cranstoun's goblin page.

XXXIII.

For the baron went on pilgrimage,
And took with him this elfish page,
To Mary's chapel of the Lowes;
For there, beside our Lady's lake,
An offering he had sworn to make,
And he would pay his vows.
But the Ladye of Branksome gathered a band
Of the best that would ride at her command;[18]
The trysting place was Newark Lee.
Wat of Harden came thither amain,
And thither came John of Thirlestane,
And thither came William of Deloraine;
They were three hundred spears and three.
Through Douglas-burn, up Yarrow stream,
Their horses prance, their lances gleam.
They came to saint Mary's lake ere day;
But the chapel was void, and the baron away.
They burned the chapel for very rage,
And cursed Lord Cranstoun's goblin page.

XXXIV.

And now, in Branksome's good green wood,
As under the aged oak he stood,
The baron's courser pricks his ears,
As if a distant noise he hears;
The dwarf waves his long lean arm on high,
And signs to the lovers to part and fly;
No time was then to vow or sigh.
Fair Margaret, through the hazel grove,
Flew like the startled cushat dove:*
The dwarf the stirrup held and rein;
Vaulted the knight on his steed amain,
And, pondering deep that morning's scene,
Rode eastward through the hawthorns green.

While thus he poured the lengthened tale,
The Minstrel's voice began to fail;
Full slyly smiled the observant page,
And gave the withered hand of age
A goblet, crowned with mighty wine,
The blood of Velez' scorched vine.
He raised the silver cup on high,
And, while the big drop filled his eye,
Prayed God to bless the duchess long,
And all who cheered a son of song.
The attending maidens smiled to see,
How long, how deep, how zealously,
The precious juice the Minstrel quaffed;
And he, emboldened by the draught,
Looked gayly back to them, and laughed.
The cordial nectar of the bowl
Swelled his old veins, and cheered his soul;
A lighter, livelier prelude ran,
Ere thus his tale again began.

* Wood-pigeon.

CANTO III.

I.

And said I that my limbs were old;
And said I that my blood was cold,
And that my kindly fire was fled,
And my poor withered heart was dead,
And that I might not sing of love?
How could I to the dearest theme,
That ever warmed a Minstrel's dream,
So foul, so false a recreant prove!
How could I name love's very name,
Nor wake my harp to notes of flame!

II.

In peace, Love tunes the shepherd's reed,
In war, he mounts the warrior's steed;
In halls, in gay attire is seen;
In hamlets, dances on the green.
Love rules the court, the camp, the grove,
And men below and saints above;
For love is heaven, and heaven is love.

III.

So thought lord Cranstoun, as I ween,
While, pondering deep the tender scene,
He rode through Branksome's hawthorn green.
But the page shouted wild and shrill,—
And scarce his helmet could he don,
When downward from the shady hill
A stately knight came pricking on.
That warrior's steed, so dapple-gray,
Was dark with sweat, and splashed with clay:
His armour red with many a stain:
He seemed in such a weary plight,
As if he had ridden the livelong night;
For it was William of Deloraine.

IV.

But no whit weary did he seem,
When, dancing in the sunny beam,
He marked the crane on the baron's crest;[1]
For his ready spear was in his rest.
Few were the words, and stern, and high,
That marked the foemen's feudal hate;
For question fierce, and proud reply,
Gave signal soon of dire debate.
Their very coursers seemed to know,
That each was other's mortal foe;
And snorted fire, when wheeled around,
To give each knight his vantage ground.

V.

In rapid round the baron bent;
He sighed a sigh, and prayed a prayer:
The prayer was to his patron saint,
The sigh was to his ladye fair.
Stout Deloraine nor sighed, nor prayed,
Nor saint nor ladye called to aid;
But he stooped his head, and couched his spear,
And spurred his steed to full career.
The meeting of these champions proud
Seemed like the bursting thunder-cloud.

VI.

Stern was the dint the borderer lent;
The stately baron backwards bent;
Bent backwards to his horse's tail,
And his plumes went scattering on the gale;
The tough ash spear, so stout and true
Into a thousand flinders flew.
But Cranstoun's lance, of more avail,
Pierced through, like silk, the borderer's mail:
Through shield, and jack, and acton past,
Deep in his bosom, broke at last.
Still sate the warrior saddle fast,
Till, stumbling in the mortal shock,
Down went the steed, the girthing broke,
Hurled on a heap lay man and horse.
The baron onward passed his course;
Nor knew, so giddy rolled his brain,
His foe lay stretched upon the plain.

VII.

But when he reined his courser round,
And saw his foeman on the ground
Lie senseless as the bloody clay,
He bade his page to stanch the wound,
And there beside the warrior stay,
And tend him in his doubtful state,
And lead him to Branksome castle-gate.
His noble mind was inly moved
For the kinsman of the maid he loved.
"This shalt thou do without delay;
No longer here myself may stay;
Unless the swifter I speed away,
Short shrift will be at my dying day."

VIII.

Away in speed lord Cranstoun rode;
The goblin-page behind abode:
His lord's command he ne'er withstood,
Though small his pleasure to do good.
As the corslet off he took,
The dwarf espied the mighty book!
Much he marvelled, a knight of pride,
Like a book-bosomed priest should ride:[2]
He thought not to search or stanch the wound,
Until the secret he had found.

IX.

The iron band, the iron clasp,
Resisted long the elfin grasp;
For when the first he had undone,
It closed as he the next begun.
Those iron clasps, that iron band,
Would not yield to unchristened hand,
Till he smeared the cover o'er
With the borderer's curdled gore;
A moment then the volume spread,
And one short spell therein he read.
It had much of glamour might,[3]
Could make a ladye seem a knight;
The cobwebs on a dungeon wall,
Seem tapestry in lordly hall;
A nutshell seem a gilded barge,
A sheeling* seem a palace large,
And youth seem age, and age seem youth;—
All was delusion, nought was truth.

X.

He had not read another spell,
When on his cheek a buffet fell,
So fierce, it stretched him on the plain,
Beside the wounded Deloraine.
From the ground he rose dismayed,
And shook his huge and matted head;
One word he muttered, and no more—
"Man of age, thou smitest sore!"—
No more the elfin page durst try
Into the wonderous book to pry;
The clasps, though smeared with Christian gore,
Shut faster than they were before.
He hid it underneath his cloak.—
Now, if you ask who gave the stroke,
I cannot tell, so mot I thrive;
It was not given by man alive.[4]

* A shepherd's hut.

XI.

Unwillingly himself he addressed,
To do his master's high behest:
He lifted up the living corse,
And laid it on the weary horse;
He led him into Branksome hall,
Before the beards of the warders all;
And each did after swear and say,
There only passed a wain of hay.
He took him to lord David's tower,
Even to the Ladye's secret bower:
And, but that stronger spells were spread,
And the door might not be opened,
He had laid him on her very bed.
Whate'er he did of gramarye,*
Was always done maliciously;
He flung the warrior on the ground,
And the blood welled freshly from the wound.

XII.

As he repassed the outer court,
He spied the fair young child at sport;
He thought to train him to the wood;
For, at a word, be it understood,
He was always for ill, and never for good.
Seemed to the boy some comrade gay
Led him forth to the woods to play;
On the drawbridge the warders stout
Saw a terrier and lurcher passing out.

XIII.

He led the boy o'er bank and fell,
Until they came to a woodland brook;
The running stream dissolved the spell,[5]
And his own elvish shape he took.
Could he have had his pleasure vilde,
He had crippled the joints of the noble child;
Or, with his fingers long and lean,
Had strangled him in fiendish spleen:
But his awful mother he had in dread,
And also his power was limited:
So he but scowled on the startled child,
And darted through the forest wild;
The woodland brook he bounding crossed,
And laughed, and shouted "Lost! lost! lost!"

XIV.

Full sore amazed at the wonderous change,
And frightened, as a child might be,
At the wild yell, and visage strange,
And the dark words of gramarye,
The child, amidst the forest bower,
Stood rooted like a lily flower;
And when at length, with trembling pace,
He sought to find where Branksome lay,
He feared to see that grisly face
Glare from some thicket on his way.
Thus, starting oft, he journeyed on,
And deeper in the wood is gone,—
For aye the more he sought his way,
The farther still he went astray,
Until he heard the mountains round
Ring to the baying of a hound.

XV.

And hark! and hark! the deep-mouthed bark
Comes nigher still, and nigher:
Bursts on the path a dark blood-hound,
His tawny muzzle tracked the ground,
And his red eye shot fire.
Soon as the wildered child saw he,
He flew at him right furiously.

* Magic.

I ween you would have seen with joy
The bearing of the gallant boy,
When, worthy of his noble sire,
His wet cheek glowed 'twixt fear and ire!
He faced the blood-hound manfully,
And held his little hat on high;
So fierce he struck, the dog, afraid,
At cautious distance hoarsely bayed,
But still in act to spring;
When dashed an archer through the glade,
And when he saw the hound was stayed,
He drew his tough bowstring:
But a rough voice cried, "Shoot not, hoy!
Ho! shoot not, Edward—'tis a boy!"

XVI.

The speaker issued from the wood,
And checked his fellow's surly mood,
And quelled the ban-dog's ire:
He was an English yeoman good,
And born in Lancashire.
Well could he hit a fallow deer,
Five hundred feet him fro;
With hand more true, and eye more clear,
No archer bended bow.
His coal-black hair, shorn round and close,
Set off his sun-burned face;
Old England's sign, Saint George's cross,
His barret-cap did grace;
His bugle-horn hung by his side,
All in a wolf-skin baldrie tied:
And his short falchion, sharp and clear,
Had pierced the throat of many a deer.

XVII.

His kirtle, made of forest green,
Reached scantly to his knee;
And, at his belt, of arrows keen
A furbished sheaf bore he:
His buckler scarce in breadth a span,
No larger fence had he:
He never counted him a man
Would strike below the knee;[6]
His slackened bow was in his hand,
And the leash, that was his blood-hound's band.

XVIII.

He would not do the fair child harm,
But held him with his powerful arm,
That he might neither fight nor flee;
For when the red cross spied he,
The boy strove long and violently.
"Now, by Saint George," the archer cries,
"Edward, methinks we have a prize!
This boy's fair face, and courage free,
Show he is come of high degree."

XIX.

"Yes! I am come of high degree,
For I am the heir of bold Buccleuch;
And, if thou dost not set me free,
False southron, thou shalt dearly rue!
For Walter of Harden shall come with speed,
And William of Deloraine, good at need,
And every Scott from Esk to Tweed;
And, if thou dost not let me go,
Despite thy arrows, and thy bow,
I'll have thee hanged to feed the crow!"

XX.

"Gramercy, for thy good will, fair boy!
My mind was never set so high;
But if thou art chief of such a clan,
And art the son of such a man,

And ever comest to thy command,
Our wardens had need to keep good order:
My bow of yew to a hazel wand,
Thou'lt make them work upon the border.
Meantime be pleased to come with me,
For good lord Dacre shalt thou see.
I think our work is well begun,
When we have taken thy father's son."

XXI.

Although the child was led away,
In Branksome still he seemed to stay,
For so the dwarf his part did play;
And, in the shape of that young boy,
He wrought the castle much annoy.
The comrades of the young Buccleuch
He pinched, and beat, and overthrew;
Nay, some of them he well nigh slew.
He tore dame Maudlin's silken tire,
And, as Sym Hall stood by the fire,
He lighted the match of his bandelier,*
And wofully scorched the hackbutteer.†
It may be hardly thought or said,
The mischief that the urchin made,
Till many of the castle guessed,
That the young baron was possessed!

XXII.

Well I ween the charm he held
The noble Ladye had soon dispelled;
But she was deeply busied then
To tend the wounded Deloraine.
Much she wondered to find him lie,
On the stone threshold stretched along;
She thought some spirit of the sky
Had done the bold moss-trooper wrong;
Because, despite her precept dread,
Perchance he in the book had read;
But the broken lance in his bosom stood,
And it was earthly steel and wood.

XXIII.

She drew the splinter from the wound,
And with a charm she stanched the blood:[7]
She bade the gash be cleansed and bound;
No longer by his couch she stood;
But she has ta'en the broken lance,
And washed it from the clotted gore,
And salved the splinter o'er and o'er.[8]
William of Deloraine, in trance,
Whene'er she turned it round and round,
Twisted, as if she galled his wound.
Then to her maidens she did say,
That he should be whole man and sound,
Within the course of a night and day.
Full long she toiled; for she did rue
Mishap to friend so stout and true.

XXIV.

So passed the day—the evening fell,
'Twas near the time of curfew bell;
The air was mild, the wind was calm,
The stream was smooth, the dew was balm;
E'en the rude watchman, on the tower,
Enjoyed and blessed the lovely hour;
Far more fair Margaret loved and blessed
The hour of silence and of rest.
On the high turret sitting lone,
She waked at times the lute's soft tone;
Touched a wild note, and, all between,
Thought of the bower of hawthorns green.

Her golden hair streamed free from band,
Her fair cheek rested on her hand,
Her blue eyes sought the west afar,
For lovers love the western star.

XXV.

Is yon the star, o'er Penchryst Pen,
That rises slowly to her ken,
And, spreading broad its wavering light,
Shakes its loose tresses on the night?
Is yon red glare the western star?—
O, 'tis the beacon blaze of war!
Scarce could she draw her tightened breath,
For well she new the fire of death!

XXVI.

The warder viewed it blazing strong,
And blew his warnote loud and long,
Till, at the high and haughty sound,
Rock, wood, and river, rung around.
The blast alarmed the festal hall,
And startled forth the warriors all;
Far downward, in the castle-yard,
Full many a torch and cresset glared;
And helms and plumes, confusedly tossed,
Were in the blaze half seen, half lost;
And spears in wild disorder shook,
Like reeds beside a frozen brook.

XXVII.

The seneschal, whose silver hair
Was reddened by the torches' glare,
Stood in the midst, with gesture proud,
And issued forth his mandates loud.
"On Penchryst glows a bale of fire,
And three are kindling on Priesthaughswire;[9]
Ride out, ride out,
The foe to scout!
Mount, mount, for Branksome,* every man!
Thou, Todrig, warn the Johnstone clan,
That ever are true and stout.
Ye need not send to Liddesdale;
For, when they see the blazing bale,
Elliots and Armstrongs never fail.—
Ride, Alton, ride, for death and life!
And warn the warden of the strife.
Young Gilbert, let our beacon blaze,
Our kin, and clan, and friends, to raise."[10]

XXVIII.

Fair Margaret, from the turret head,
Heard, far below, the coursers' tread,
While loud the harness rang,
As to their seats, with clamor dread,
The ready horsmen sprang;
And trampling hoofs, and iron coats,
And leaders' voices, mingled notes,
And out! and out!
In hasty route,
The horsemen galloped forth;
Dispersing to the south to scout,
And east, and west, and north,
To view their coming enemies,
And warn their vassals and allies.

XXIX.

The ready page, with hurried hand
Awaked the need-fire's† slumbering brand,
And ruddy blushed the heaven:
For a sheet of flame, from the turret high,
Waved like a bloodflag on the sky,
All flaring and uneven.

* *Bandelier*, belt for carrying ammunition.
† *Hackbutteer*, musketeer.

* *Mount for Branksome* was the gathering word of the Scotts.
† *Need-fire*, beacon.

And soon a score of fires, I ween,
From height, and hill, and cliff, were seen;
Each with warlike tidings fraught;
Each from each the signal caught;
Each after each they glanced to sight,
As stars arise upon the night.
They gleamed on many a dusky tarn,*
Haunted by the lonely earn;†
On many a cairn's gray pyramid,
Where urns of mighty chiefs lie hid;[11]
Till high Dunedin the blazes saw,
From Soltra and Dumpender Law;
And Lothian heard the regent's order,
That all should bowne‡ them for the Border.

XXX.

The livelong night in Branksome rang
The ceaseless sound of steel;
The castle-bell, with backward clang,
Sent forth the larum peal;
Was frequent heard the heavy jar,
Where massy stone and iron bar
Were piled on echoing keep and tower,
To whelm the foe with deadly shower;
Was frequent heard the changing guard,
And watchword from the sleepless ward;
While, wearied by the endless din,
Blood-hound and ban-dog yelled within.

XXXI.

The noble dame, amid the broil,
Shared the gray seneschal's high toil,
And spoke of danger with a smile;
Cheered the young knights, and council sage
Held with the chiefs of riper age.
No tidings of the foe were brought,
Nor of his numbers knew they aught,
Nor in what time the truce he sought.
Some said, that there were thousands ten,
And others weened that it was nought
But Leven clans, or Tynedale men,
Who came to gather in black mail,‖
And Liddesdale, with small avail,
Might drive them lightly back agen.
So passed the anxious night away,
And welcome was the peep of day.

Ceased the high sound—the listening throng
Applaud the Master of the song;
And marvel much, in helpless age,
So hard should be his pilgrimage.
Had he no friend, no daughter dear,
His wandering toil to share and cheer;
No son, to be his father's stay,
And guide him on the rugged way?
"Ay, once he had—but he was dead!"—
Upon the harp he stooped his head,
And busied himself the strings withal,
To hide the tear, that fain would fall.
In solemn measure, soft and slow,
Arose a father's notes of wo.

CANTO IV.

I.

Sweet Teviot! on thy silver tide
The glaring bale-fires blaze no more;
No longer steel-clad warriors ride
Along thy wild and willowed shore:
Where'er thou wind'st, by dale or hill,
All, all is peaceful, all is still,
As if thy waves, since time was born,
Since first they rolled their way to Tweed,
Had only heard the shepherd's reed,
Nor started at the bugle-horn.

II.

Unlike the tide of human time,
Which, though it change in ceaseless flow,
Retains each grief, retains each crime,
Its earliest course was doomed to know
And, darker as it downward bears,
Is stained with past and present tears.
Low as that tide has ebbed with me,
It still reflects to memory's eye
The hour, my brave, my only boy,
Fell by the side of great Dundee.[1]
Why, when the volleying musket played
Against the bloody Highland blade,
Why was I not beside him laid!—
Enough—he died the death of fame;
Enough—he died with conquering Græme!

III.

Now over border, dale and fell,
Full wide and far was terror spread;
For pathless march, and mountain cell,
The peasant left his lowly shed.[2]
The frightened flocks and herds were pent
Beneath the peel's rude battlement;
And maids and matrons dropt the tear,
While ready warriors seized the spear.
From Branksome's towers, the watchman's eye
Dun wreaths of distant smoke can spy,
Which, curling in the rising sun,
Showed southern ravage[3] was begun.

IV.

Now loud the heedful gate-ward cried—
"Prepare ye all for blows and blood!
Wat Tinlinn,[4] from the Liddel-side,
Comes wading through the flood.
Full oft the Tynedale snatchers knock
At his lone gate, and prove the lock;
It was but last Saint Barnabright
They sieged him a whole summer night;
But fled at morning; well they knew,
In vain he never twanged the yew.
Right sharp has been the evening shower,
That drove him from his Liddel tower;
And, by my faith," the gate-ward said,
"I think 'twill prove a Warden-raid."*

V.

While thus he spoke, the bold yeoman
Entered the echoing barbican.
He led a small and shaggy nag,
That through a bog, from hag to hag†
Could bound like any Bilhope stag,
It bore his wife and children twain.
A half-clothed serf‡ was all their train:
His wife, stout, ruddy, and dark-browed,
Of silver brooch and bracelet proud,[6]
Laughed to her friends among the crowd.
He was of stature passing tall,
But sparely formed, and lean withal:
A battered morion on his brow;
A leathern jack, as fence enow,
On his broad shoulders loosely hung;
A border axe behind was slung;
His spear, six Scottish ells in length,
Seemed newly died with gore;
His shafts and bow, of wonderous strength,
His hardy partner bore.

---

* *Tarn*, a mountain lake.
† *Earn*, the Scottish eagle. ‡ *Bowne*, make ready.
‖ Protection money exacted by free-booters.

* An inroad commanded by the warden in person.
† The broken ground in a bog. ‡ Bondsman.

VI.

Thus to the ladye did Tinlinn show
The tidings of the English foe.—
"Belted Will Howard[7] is marching here,
And hot lord Dacre,[8] with many a spear,
And all the German hagbut-men,[9]
Who long have lain at Askerten:
They crossed the Liddel at curfew hour,
And burned my little lonely tower;
The fiend receive their souls therefor!
It had not been burned this year and more.
Barn-yard, and dwelling, blazing bright,
Served to guide me on my flight:
But I was chased the livelong night.
Black John of Akeshaw, and Fergus Græme,
Full fast upon my traces came,
Until I turned at Priesthaughscrogg,
And shot their horses in the bog,
Slew Fergus with my lance outright—
I had him long at high despite:
He drove my cows last Eastern's night."

VII.

Now, weary scouts from Liddesdale,
Fast hurrying in, confirmed the tale;
As far as they could judge by ken,
Three hours would bring to Teviot's strand
Three thousand armed Englishmen.
Meanwhile, full many a warlike band,
From Teviot, Aill, and Ettrick shade,
Came in, their chief's defence to aid.
There was saddling and mounting in haste,
There was pricking o'er moor and lee;
He that was last at the trysting place
Was but lightly held of his gay ladye.

VIII.

From fair Saint Mary's silver wave,
From dreary Gamescleugh's dusky height,
His ready lances Thirlestane[10] brave
Arrayed beneath a banner bright.
The treasured fleur-de-luce he claims
To wreath his shield, since royal James,
Encamped by Fala's mossy wave,
The proud distinction grateful gave,
For faith mid feudal jars;
What time, save Thirlestane alone,
Of Scotland's stubborn barons none
Would march to southern wars;
And hence, in fair remembrance worn,
Yon sheaf of spears his crest has borne;
Hence his high motto shines revealed—
"Ready, aye ready," for the field.

IX.

An aged knight, to danger steeled,
With many a moss-trooper, came on:
And azure in a golden field,
The stars and crescent graced his shield,
Without the bend of Murdieston.[11]
Wide lay his lands round Oakwood tower,
And wide round haunted Castle Ower;
High over Borthwick's mountain flood,
His wood-embosomed mansion stood;
In the dark glen, so deep below,
The herds of plundered England low,
His bold retainers' daily food,
And bought with danger, blows, and blood.
Maraunding chief! his sole delight
The moonlight raid, the morning fight;
Not even the flower of Yarrow's charms,
In youth, might tame his rage for arms;
And still, in age, he spurned at rest,
And still his brows the helmet pressed,
Albeit the blanched locks below
Were white as Dinlay's spotless snow:
Five stately warriors drew the sword
Before their father's band;
A braver knight than Harden's lord
Ne'er belted on a brand.

X.

Scotts of Eskdale,[12] a stalwart band,
Came trooping down the Todshawhill;
By the sword they won their land,
And by the sword they hold it still.
Hearken, Ladye, to the tale,
How thy sires won fair Eskdale.—
Earl Morton was lord of that valley fair,
The Beattisons were his vassals there.
The earl was gentle, and mild of mood,
The vassals were warlike, and fierce, and rude;
High of heart, and haughty of word,
Little they recked of a tame liege lord.
The earl to fair Eskdale came,
Homage and seignory to claim:
Of Gilbert the Galliard, a heriot* he sought,
Saying, "Give thy best steed, as a vassal ought."
—"Dear to me is my bonny white steed,
Oft has he helped me at pinch of need;
Lord and earl though thou be, I trow,
I can rein Bucksfoot better than thou."
Word on word gave fuel to fire,
Till so highly blazed the Beattisons' ire,
But that the earl to flight had ta'en,
The vassals there their lord had slain.
Sore he plied both whip and spur,
As he urged his steed through Eskdale muir;
And it fell down a weary weight,
Just on the threshold of Branksome gate.

XI.

The earl was a wrathful man to see,
Full fain avenged would he be.
In haste to Branksome's lord he spoke,
Saying—"Take these traitors to thy yoke:
For a cast of hawks, and a purse of gold,
All Eskdale I'll sell thee, to have and hold:
Beshrew thy heart, of the Beattisons' clan
If thou leavest on Esk a landed man:
But spare Woodkerrick's lands alone,
For he lent me his horse to escape upon."—
A glad man then was Branksome bold,
Down he flung him the purse of gold;
To Eskdale soon he spurred amain,
And with him five hundred riders has ta'en.
He left his merrymen in the midst of the hill,
And bade them hold them close and still;
And alone he wended to the plain,
To meet with the Galliard and all his train.
To Gilbert the Galliard thus he said:—
"Know thou me for thy liege lord and head:
Deal not with me as with Morton tame,
For Scotts play best at the roughest game.
Give me in peace my heriot due,
Thy bonny white steed, or thou shalt rue.
If my horn I three times wind,
Eskdale shall long have the sound in mind."

XII.

Loudly the Beattison laughed in scorn:—
"Little care we for thy winded horn.
Ne'er shall it be the Galliard's lot,
To yield his steed to a haughty Scott.

* The feudal superior, in certain cases, was entitled to the best horse of the vassal, in name of Heriot, or Herezeld.

Wend thou to Branksome back on foot,
With rusty spur and miry boot."—
He blew his bugle so loud and hoarse,
That the dun deer started at far Craikcross;
He blew again so loud and clear,
Through the gray mountain mist there did lances appear;
And the third blast rang with such a din,
That the echoes answered from Pentoun-linn,
And all his riders came lightly in.
Then had you seen a gallant shock,
When saddles were emptied, and lances broke!
For each scornful word the Galliard had said,
A Beattison on the field was laid.
His own good sword the chieftain drew,
And he bore the Galliard through and through;
Where the Beattisons' blood mixed with the rill,
The Galliard's Haugh, men call it still.
The Scotts have scattered the Beattison clan,
In Eskdale they left but one landed man.
The valley of Esk, from the mouth to the source,
Was lost and won for that bonny white horse.

XIII.

Whitslade the Hawk, and Headshaw came,
And warriors more than I may name;
From Yarrow-cleuch to Hindhaug-swair,
From Woodhouselie to Chester-glen,
Trooped man and horse, and bow and spear;
Their gathering word was Bellenden.[13]
And better hearts o'er Border sod
To siege or reseue never rode.
The Ladye marked the aids come in,
And high her heart of pride arose:
She bade her youthful son attend,
That he might know his father's friend,
And learn to face his foes.
"The boy is ripe to look on war;
I saw him draw a cross-bow stiff,
And his true arrow struck afar
The raven's nest upon the sliff;
The red cross, on a southern breast,
Is broader than the raven's nest:
Thou, Whitslade, shall teach him his weapon to wield,
And over him hold his father's shield."

XIV.

Well may you think, the wily page
Cared not to face the Ladye sage.
He counterfeited childish fear,
And shrieked, and shed full many a tear,
And moaned and plained in manner wild.
The attendants to the Ladye told,
Some fairy, sure, had changed the child,
That wont to be so free and bold.
Then wrathful was the noble dame;
She blushed blood-red for very shame:—
"Hence! ere the elan his faintness view;
Hence with the weakling to Buccleuch!—
Wat Tinlinn, thou shalt be his guide
To Rangleburn's lonely side—
Sure some fell fiend has cursed our line,
That coward should e'er be son of mine!"

XV.

A heavy task Wat Tinlinn had,
To guide the counterfeited lad.
Soon as the palfrey felt the weight
Of that ill-omen'd elfish freight,
He bolted, sprung, and reared amain,
Nor heeded bit, nor curb, nor rein.
It cost Wat Tinlinn mickle toil
To drive him but a Scottish mile;
But, as a shallow brook they crossed,
The elf, amid the running stream,
His figure changed, like form, in dream,
And fled, and shouted, "Lost! lost! lost!"
Full fast the urchin ran and laughed,
But faster still a cloth yard shaft
Whistled from startled Tinlinn's yew,
And pierced his shoulder through and through.
Although the imp might not be slain,
And though the wound soon healed again,
Yet, as he ran, he yelled for pain;
And Wat of Tinlinn, much aghast,
Rode back to Branksome fiery fast.

XVI.

Soon on the hill's steep verge he stood,
That looks o'er Branksome's towers and wood;
And martial murmurs, from below,
Proclaimed the approaching southern foe.
Through the dark wood, in mingled tone,
Were border-pipes and bugles blown:
The coursers' neighing he could ken,
And measured tread of marching men;
While broke at times the solemn hum,
The Almayn's sullen kettle-drum;
And banners tall, of crimson sheen,
Above the copse appear;
And, glistening through the hawthorns green,
Shine helm, and shield, and spear.

XVII.

Light forayers first, to view the ground,
Spurred their fleet coursers loosely round;
Behind, in close array and fast,
The Kendal archers, all in green,
Obedient to the bugle blast,
Advancing from the wood were seen.
To back and guard the archer band,
Lord Dacre's bill-men were at hand:
A hardy race, on Irthing bred,
With kirtles white, and crosses red,
Arrayed beneath the banner tall,
That streamed o'er Acre's conquered wall:
And minstrels, as they marched in order,
Played, "Noble lord Dacre, he dwells on the Border."

XVIII.

Behind the English bill and bow,
The mercenaries, firm and slow,
Moved on to fight in dark array,
By Conrad led of Wolfenstein,
Who brought the band from distant Rhine,
And sold their blood for foreign pay;
The camp their home, their law the sword,
They knew no country owned no lord.[14]
They were not armed like England's sons,
But bore the levin-darting guns;
Buff coats, all frounced and 'broidered o'er,
And morsing-horns* and scarfs they wore;
Each better knee was bared, to aid
The warriors in the escalade;
And, as they marched, in rugged tongue,
Songs of Teutonic feuds they sung.

XIX.

But louder still the clamour grew,
And louder still the minstrels blew,
When, from beneath the greenwood tree,
Rode forth lord Howard's chivalry;
His men at arms, with glaive and spear,
Brought up the battle's glittering rear.

* Powder flasks.

There many a youthful knight, full keen
To gain his spurs, in arms was seen;
With favour in his crest, or glove,
Memorial of his ladye-love.
So rode they forth in fair array,
Till full their lengthened lines display;
Then called a halt, and made a stand,
And cried, "Saint George for merry England!"

XX.

Now every English eye, intent,
On Branksome's armed towers was bent:
So near they were, that they might know
The straining harsh of each cross bow:
On battlement and bartizan
Gleamed axe, and spear, and partizan;
Falcon and culver,* on each tower,
Stood prompt their deadly hail to shower;
And flashing armour frequent broke
From eddying whirls of sable smoke,
Where, upon tower and turret head,
The seathing pitch and molten lead
Reeked, like a witch's cauldron red.
While yet they gaze, the bridges fall,
The wicket opes, and from the wall
Rides forth the hoary seneschal.

XXI.

Armed he rode, all save the head,
His white beard o'er his breast-plate spread;
Unbroke by age, erect his seat,
He ruled his eager courser's gait;
Forced him, with chastened fire, to prance,
And, high curvetting, slow advance:
In sign of truce, his better hand
Displayed a peeled willow wand;
His squire, attending in the rear,
Bore high a gauntlet on a spear.[15]
When they espied him riding out,
Lord Howard and lord Dacre stout
Sped to the front of their array,
To hear what this old knight should say.

XXII.

"Ye English warden lords, of you
Demands the ladye of Buccleuch,
Why, 'gainst the truce of Border-tide,
In hostile guise ye dare to ride,
With Kendal bow, and Gilsland brand,
And all yon mercenary band,
Upon the bounds of fair Scotland?
My ladye redes you swith return;
And, if but one poor straw you burn,
Or do our towers so much molest,
As scare one swallow from her nest,
Saint Mary! but we'll light a brand,
Shall warm your hearths in Cumberland."

XXIII.

A wrathful man was Dacre's lord,
But calmer Howard took the word:
"May't please thy dame, sir seneschal,
To seek the castle's outward wall,
Our pursuivant-at-arms shall show,
Both why we came, and when we go."
The message sped, the noble dame
To the wall's outward circle came;
Each chief around leaned on his spear,
To see the pursuivant appear.
All in lord Howard's livery dressed,
The lion argent decked his breast;

He led a boy of blooming hue—
O sight to meet a mother's view!
It was the heir of great Buccleuch.
Obeisance meet the herald made,
And thus his master's will he said:

XXIV.

"It irks, high dame, my noble lords,
'Gainst ladye fair to draw their swords;
But yet they may not tamely see,
All through the western wardenry,
Your law-contemning kinsmen ride,
And burn and spoil the Border-side;
And ill beseems your rank and birth
To make your towers a flemen's-firth.*
We claim from thee William of Deloraine,
That he may suffer march-treason pain;[16]
It was but last Saint Cuthbert's even
He pricked to Stapleton on Leven,
Harried† the lands of Richard Musgrave,
And slew his brother by dint of glaive.
Then, since a lone and widowed dame
These restless riders may not tame,
Either receive within thy towers
Two hundred of my master's powers,
Or straight they sound their warrison,‡
And storm and spoil thy garrison;
And this fair boy, to London led,
Shall good king Edward's page be bred."

XXV.

He ceased;—and loud the boy did cry,—
And stretch'd his little arms on high;
Implor'd for aid each well-known face,
And strove to seek the dame's embrace.
A moment changed that ladye's cheer;
Gushed to her eye the unbidden tear;
She gazed upon the leaders round,
And dark and sad each warrior frowned;
Then, deep within her sobbing breast
She locked the struggling sigh to rest;
Unaltered and collected stood,
And thus replied in dauntless mood:—

XXVI.

"Say to your lords of high emprise,
Who war on women and on boys
That either William of Deloraine
Will cleanse him, by oath, of march-treason stain,[17]
Or else he will the combat take
'Gainst Musgrave, for his honour's sake.
No knight in Cumberland so good,
But William may count with him kin and blood.
Knighthood he took of Douglas' sword,[18]
When English blood swelled Ancram ford;[19]
And but that lord Dacre's steed was wight,
And bore him ably in the fight,
Himself had seen him dubbed a knight.
For the young heir of Branksome's line,
God be his aid, and God be mine;
Through me no friend shall meet his doom;
Here, while I live, no foe finds room.
Then, if thy lords their purpose urge,
Take our defiance loud and high;
Our slogan is their lyke-wake‖ dirge,
Our moat, the grave where they shall lie."

XXVII.

Proud she looked round, applause to claim—
Then lightened Thirlestane's eye of flame;

* Ancient pieces of artillery.

* An asylum for outlaws. † Plundered. ‡ Note of assault.
‖ Lyke-wake, the watching a corpse previous to interment.

His bugle Wat of Harden blew:
Pensils and pennons wide were flung,
To Heaven the Border slogan rung,
"Saint Mary for the young Buccleuch!"
The English war-cry answered wide,
And forward bent each southern spear;
Each Kendal archer made a stride,
And drew the bow-string to his ear;
Each minstrel's war-note loud was blown:—
But, ere a gray-goose shaft had flown,
A horseman galloped from the rear.

XXVIII.

"Ah! noble lords!" he, breathless, said,
"What treason has your march betrayed?
What make you here, from aid so far,
Before you walls, around you war?
Your foemen triumph in the thought,
That in the toils the lion's caught.
Already on dark Ruberslaw
The Douglas holds his weapon-schaw,*
The lances, waving in his train,
Clothe the dun heap like autumn grain;
And on the Liddel's northern strand,
To bar retreat to Cumberland,
Lord Maxwell ranks his merry men good,
Beneath the eagle and the rood;
And Jedwood, Esk, and Teviot dale,
Have to proud Angus come;
And all the Merse and Lauderdale
Have risen with haughty Home.
An exile from Northumberland,
In Liddesdale I've wandered long;
But still my heart was with merry England,
And cannot brook my country's wrong;
And hard I've spurred all night to show
The mustering of the coming foe."

XXIX.

"And let them come!" fierce Dacre cried;
"For soon yon crest, my father's pride,
That swept the shores of Judah's sea,
And waved in gales of Galilee,
From Branksome's highest towers displayed,
Shall mock the rescue's lingering aid!—
Level each harquebuss on row;
Draw, merry archers, draw the bow;
Up, bill-men, to the walls, and cry,
Dacre for England, win or die!"

XXX.

"Yet hear," quoth Howard, "calmly hear,
Nor deem my words the words of fear:
For who, in field or foray slack,
Saw the blanche lion[20] e'er fall back?
But thus to risk our Border flower
In strife against a kingdom's power,
Ten thousand Scots 'gainst thousands three,
Certes, were desperate policy.
Nay, take the terms the Ladye made,
Ere conscious of the advancing aid:
Let Musgrave meet fierce Deloraine
In single fight,[21] and if he gain,
He gains for us; but if he's crossed,
'Tis but a single warrior lost:
The rest, retreating as they came,
Avoid defeat, and death, and shame."

XXXI.

Ill could the haughty Dacre brook
His brother-warden's sage rebuke:
And yet his forward step he stayed,
And slow and sullenly obeyed.

But ne'er again the Border-side
Did these two lords in friendship ride;
And this slight discontent, men say,
Cost blood upon another day.

XXXII.

The pursuivant-at-arms again
Before the castle took his stand;
His trumpet called, with parleying strain,
The leaders of the Scottish band;
And he defied, in Musgrave's right,
Stout Deloraine to single fight;
A gauntlet at their feet he laid,
And thus the terms of fight he said:—
"If in the lists good Musgrave's sword
Vanquish the knight of Deloraine,
Your youthful chieftain, Branksome's lord,
Shall hostage for his clan remain:
If Deloraine foil good Musgrave,
The boy his liberty shall have.
Howe'er it falls, the English band,
Unharming Scots, by Scots unharmed,
In peaceful march, like men unarmed,
Shall straight retreat to Cumberland."

XXXIII.

Unconscious of the near relief,
The proffer pleased each Scottish chief,
Though much the Ladye sage gainsayed,
For though their hearts were brave and true,
From Jedwood's recent sack they knew,
How tardy was the regent's aid:
And you may guess the noble dame
Durst not the secret prescience own,
Sprung from the art she might not name,
By which the coming help was known.
Closed was the compact, and agreed,
That lists should be enclosed with speed,
Beneath the castle, on a lawn:
They fixed the morrow for the strife,
On foot, with Scottish axe and knife,
At the fourth hour from peep of dawn;
When Deloraine, from sickness freed,
Or else a champion in his stead,
Should for himself and chieftain stand,
Against stout Musgrave, hand to hand.

XXXIV.

I know right well, that, in their lay,
Full many minstrels sing and say,
Such combat should be made on horse,
On foaming steed, in full career,
With brand to aid, when as the spear
Should shiver in the course:
But he, the jovial harper,[22] taught
Me, yet a youth, how it was fought,
In guise which now I say;
He knew each ordinance and clause
Of black lord Archibald's battle laws,[23]
In the old Douglas' day.
He brooked not, he, that scoffing tongue
Should tax his minstrelsy with wrong,
Or call his song untrue;
For this, when they the goblet plied,
And such rude taunt had chafed his pride,
The bard of Reull he slew.
On Teviot's side, in fight they stood,
And tuneful hands were stained with blood;
Where still the thorn's white branches wave,
Memorial o'er his rival's grave.

XXXV.

Why should I tell the rigid doom,
That dragged my master to his tomb;

* *Weapon-schaw*, the military array of a country.

How Ousenam's maidens tore their hair,
Wept till their eyes were dead and dim,
And wrung their hands for love of him,
Who died at Jedwood Air?
He died!—His scholars, one by one,
To the cold silent grave are gone;
And I, alas! survive alone,
To muse o'er rivalries of yore,
And grieve that I shall hear no more
The strains, with envy heard before;
For, with my minstrel brethren fled,
My jealousy of song is dead.

He paused: the listening dames again
Applaud the hoary Minstrel's strain;
With many a word of kindly cheer,—
In pity half, and half sincere,—
Marvelled the duchess how so well
His legendary song could tell,—
Of ancient deeds, so long forgot;
Of feuds, whose memory was not;
Of forests, now laid waste and bare;
Of towers, which harbour now the hare;
Of manners, long since changed and gone;
Of chiefs, who under their gray stone
So long had slept, that fickle Fame
Had blotted from her rolls their name,
And twined round some new minion's head
The fading wreath for which they bled;
In sooth, 'twas strange, this old man's verse
Could call them from their marble hearse.
The Harper smiled, well pleased; for ne'er
Was flattery lost on poet's ear.
A simple race! they waste their toil
For the vain tribute of a smile;
E'en when in age their flame expires,
Her dulcet breath can fan its fires:
Their drooping fancy wakes at praise,
And strives to trim the short-lived blaze.

Smiled then, well pleased, the Aged Man,
And thus his tale continued ran.

CANTO V.

I.

Call it not vain:—they do not err,
Who say, that, when the Poet dies,
Mute Nature mourns her worshipper,
And celebrates his obsequies;
Who say, tall cliff, and cavern lone,
For the departed bard make moan;
That mountains weep in crystal rill;
That flowers in tears of balm distil;
Through his loved groves that breezes sigh,
And oaks, in deeper groan, reply;
And rivers teach their rushing wave
To murmur dirges round his grave.

II.

Not that, in sooth, o'er mortal urn
Those things inanimate can mourn;
But that the stream, the wood, the gale,
Is vocal with the plaintive wail
Of those, who, else forgotten long,
Lived in the poet's faithful song,
And, with the poet's parting breath,
Whose memory feels a second death.
The maid's pale shade, who wails her lot,
That love, true love, should be forgot,
From rose and hawthorn shakes the tear
Upon the gentle minstrel's bier:
The phantom knight, his glory fled,
Mourns o'er the field he heaped with dead;
Mounts the wild blast that sweeps amain,
And shrieks along the battle-plain:
The chief, whose antique crownlet long
Still sparkled in the feudal song,
Now, from the mountain's misty throne,
Sees, in the thanedom once his own,
His ashes undistinguished lie,
His place, his power, his memory die:
His groans the lonely caverns fill,
His tears of rage impel the rill;
All mourn the minstrel's harp unstrung,
Their name unknown, their praise unsung.

III.

Scarcely the hot assault was staid,
The terms of truce were scarcely made,
When they could spy, from Branksome's towers,
The advancing march of martial powers;
Thick clouds of dust afar appeared,
And trampling steeds were faintly heard;
Bright spears, above the columns dun,
Glanced momentary to the sun;
And feudal banners fair displayed
The bands that moved to Branksome's aid.

IV.

Vails not to tell each hardy clan,
From the fair Middle Marches came;
The Bloody Heart[1] blazed in the van,
Announcing Douglas' dreaded name!
Vails not to tell what steeds did spurn,
Where the Seven Spears of Wedderburne[2]
Their men in battle-order set;
And Swinton[3] laid the lance in rest,
That tamed of yore the sparkling crest
Of Clarence's Plantagenet.
Nor lists I say what hundreds more,
From the rich Merse and Lammermore,
And Tweed's fair borders, to the war,
Beneath the crest of Old Dunbar,
And Hepburn's mingled banners come,
Down the steep mountain glittering far,
And shouting still, "a Home! a Home!"[4]

V.

Now squire and knight, from Branksome sent,
On many a courteous message went;
To every chief and lord they paid
Meet thanks for prompt and powerful aid;
And told them,—how a truce was made,
And how a day of fight was ta'en
'Twixt Musgrave and stout Deloraine;
And how the Ladye prayed them dear,
That all would stay the fight to see,
And deign, in love and courtesy,
To taste of Branksome cheer.
Nor, while they bade to feast each Scot,
Were England's noble lords forgot;
Himself, the hoary seneschal,
Rode forth, in seemly terms to call
Those gallant foes to Branksome hall.
Accepted Howard, than whom knight
Was never dubbed more bold in fight;
Nor, when from war and armour free,
More famed for stately courtesy.
But angry Dacre rather chose
In his pavilion to repose.

VI.

Now, noble Dame, perchance you ask,
How these two hostile armies met?
Deeming it were no easy task
To keep the truce which here was set;
Where martial spirits, all on fire,
Breathed only blood and mortal ire.

By mutual inroads, mutual blows,
By habit, and by nation, foes,
They met on Teviot's strand:
They met, and sate them mingled down,
Without a threat, without a frown,
As brothers meet in foreign land:
The hands, the spear that lately grasped,
Still in the mailed gauntlet clasped,
Were interchanged in greeting dear;
Visors were raised, and faces shown,
And many a friend, to friend made known,
Partook of social cheer.
Some drove the jolly bowl about;
With dice and draughts some chased the day;
And some, with many a merry shout,
In riot, revelry, and rout,
Pursued the foot-ball play.[5]

VII.

Yet, be it known, had bugles blown,
Or sign of war been seen,
Those bands, so fair together ranged,
Those hands, so frankly interchanged,
Had died with gore the green.
The merry shout by Teviot side
Had sunk in war-cries wild and wide,
And in the groan of death;
And whingers,* now in friendship bare,
The social meal to part and share,
Had found a bloody sheath.
'Twixt truce and war, such sudden change
Was not infrequent, nor held strange,
In the old Border-day;[6]
But yet on Branksome's towers and town,
In peaceful merriment, sunk down
The sun's declining ray.

VIII.

The blithsome signs of wassel gay
Decayed not with the dying day;
Soon through the latticed windows tall
Of lofty Branksome's lordly hall,
Divided square by shafts of stone,
Huge flakes of ruddy lustre shone;
Nor less the gilded rafters rang
With merry harp and beakers' clang:
And frequent, on the darkening plain,
Loud hollo, whoop, or whistle ran,
As bands, their stragglers to regain,
Give the shrill watchword of their clan;[7]
And revellers, o'er their bowls, proclaim
Douglas or Dacre's conquering name.

IX.

Less frequent heard, and fainter still,
At length, the various clamours died;
And you might hear, from Branksome hill,
No sound but Teviot's rushing tide;
Save, when the changing sentinel
The challenge of his watch could tell;
And save, where, through the dark profound,
The clanging axe and hammer's sound
Rung from the nether lawn;
For many a busy hand toiled there,
Strong pales to shape, and beams to square,
The lists' dread barriers to prepare
Against the morrow's dawn.

X.

Margaret from hall did soon retreat,
Despite the Dame's reproving eye;
Nor marked she, as she left her seat,
Full many a stifled sigh:
For many a noble warrior strove
To win the flower of Teviot's love,
And many a bold ally.—
With throbbing head and anxious heart,
All in her lonely bower apart,
In broken sleep she lay;
By times, from silken couch she rose;
While yet the bannered hosts repose,
She viewed the dawning day:
Of all the hundreds sunk to rest,
First woke the loveliest and the best.

XI.

She gazed upon the inner court,
Which in the tower's tall shadow lay;
Where coursers' clang, and stamp, and snort,
Had rung the live-long yesterday;
Now still as death; till, stalking slow,—
The jingling spurs announced his tread,—
A stately warrior passed below;
But when he raised his plumed head—
Blessed Mary! can it be?—
Secure, as if in Ousenam bowers,
He walks through Branksome's hostile towers,
With fearless step and free.
She dared not sign, she dared not speak—
Oh! if one page's slumbers break,
His blood the price must pay!
Not all the pearls queen Mary wears,
Not Margaret's yet more precious tears,
Shall buy his life a day.

XII.

Yet was his hazard small; for well
You may bethink you of the spell
Of that sly urchin page;
This to his lord he did impart,
And made him seem, by glamour art,
A knight from hermitage.
Unchallenged, thus, the warder's post,
The court, unchallenged, thus he crossed,
For all the vassalage:
But, O! what magic's quaint disguise
Could blind fair Margaret's azure eyes!
She started from her seat;
While with surprise and fear she strove,
And both could scarcely master love—
Lord Henry's at her feet.

XIII.

Oft have I mused, what purpose bad
That foul malicious urchin had
To bring this meeting round;
For happy love's a heavenly sight,
And by a vile malignant sprite
In such no joy is found;
And oft I've deemed, perchance he thought
Their erring passion might have wrought
Sorrow, and sin, and shame;
And death to Cranstoun's gallant knight,
And to the gentle ladye bright,
Disgrace, and loss of fame.
But earthly spirit could not tell
The heart of them that loved so well.
True love's the gift which God has given
To man alone beneath the heaven.
It is not fantasy's hot fire,
Whose wishes, soon as granted fly;
It liveth not in fierce desire,
With dead desire it doth not die;
It is the secret sympathy,
The silver link, the silken tie,
Which heart to heart, and mind to mind,
In body and in soul can bind.—

* A sort of knife, or poniard.

Now leave we Margaret and her knight,
To tell you of the approaching fight.

XIV.

Their warning blast the bugles blew,
The pipe's shrill port* aroused each clan:
In haste, the deadly strife to view,
The trooping warriors eager ran:
Thick round the lists their lances stood,
Like blasted pines in Ettrick wood;
To Branksome many a look they threw,
The combatants' approach to view,
And bandied many a word of boast,
About the knight each favoured most.

XV.

Meantime full anxious was the dame;
For now arose disputed claim,
Of who should fight for Deloraine,
'Twixt Harden and 'twixt Thirlestane:
'They gan to reckon kin and rent,
And frowning brow on brow was bent;
But yet not long the strife—for, lo!
Himself, the knight of Deloraine,
Strong, as it seemed, and free from pain,
In armour sheathed from top to toe,
Appeared, and craved the combat due.
The dame her charm successful knew,†
And the fierce chiefs their claims withdrew.

XVI.

When for the lists they sought the plain,
The stately lady's silken rein
Did noble Howard hold;
Unarmed by her side he walked,
And much, in courteous phrase, they talked
Of feats of arms of old.
Costly his garb—his Flemish ruff
Fell o'er his doublet, shaped of buff,
With satin slashed, and lined;
Tawny his boot, and gold his spur,
His cloak was all of Poland fur,
His hose with silver twined;
His Bilboa blade, by Marchmen felt,
Hung in a broad and studded belt;
Hence, in rude phrase, the Borderers still
Call'd noble Howard, belted Will.

XVII.

Behind lord Howard and the dame,
Fair Margaret on her palfrey came,
Whose foot-cloth swept the ground;
White was her wimple and her veil,
And her loose locks a chaplet pale
Of whitest roses bound.
The lordly Angus, by her side,
In courtesy to cheer her tried;
Without his aid, her hand in vain
Had strove to guide her broidered rein.
He deemed she suddered at the sight
Of warriors met for mortal fight;
But cause of terror, all unguessed,
Was fluttering in her gentle breast,
When, in their chairs of crimson placed,
The dame and she the barriers graced.

XVIII.

Prize of the field, the young Buccleuch,
An English knight led forth to view;
Scarce rued the boy his present plight,
So much he longed to see the fight.
Within the lists, in knightly pride,
High Home and haughty Dacre ride;
Their leading staffs of steel they wield,
As marshals of the mortal field;
While to each knight their care assigned
Like vantage of the sun and wind.
Then heralds hoarse did loud proclaim,
In king and queen, and warden's name,
That none, while lasts the strife,
Should dare, by look, or sign, or word,
Aid to a champion to afford,
On peril of his life;
And not a breath the silence broke,
Till thus the alternate heralds spoke:—

XIX.

ENGLISH HERALD.

Here stapdeth Richard of Musgrave,
Good knight and true, and freely born,
Amends from Deloraine to crave,
For foul despiteous scathe and scorn:
He sayeth, that William of Deloraine
Is traitor false by Border laws;
This with his sword he will maintain,
So help him God, and his good cause!

XX.

SCOTTISH HERALD.

Here standeth William of Deloraine,
Good knight and true, of noble strain,
Who sayeth, that foul treason's stain,
Since he bore arms, ne'er soiled his coat;
And that, so help him God above!
He will on Musgrave's body prove,
He lies most foully in his throat.

LORD DACRE.

Forward, brave champions, to the fight!
Sound trumpets!——

LORD HOME.

——"God defend the right!"

Then, Teviot! how thine echoes rang,
When bugle-sound and trumpet clang
Let loose the martial foes,
And in mid list, with shield poised high,
And measured step and wary eye,
The combatants did close.

XXI.

Ill would it suit your gentle ear,
Ye lovely listeners, to hear
How to the axe the helms did sound,
And blood poured down from many a wound;
For desperate was the strife and long,
And either warrior fierce and strong.
But, were each dame a listening knight,
I well could tell how warriors fight;
For I have seen war's lightning flashing,
Seen the claymore with bayonet clashing,
Seen through red blood the war-horse dashing,
And scorned, amid the reeling strife,
To yield a step for death or life.

XXII.

'Tis done, 'tis done! that fatal blow
Has stretched him on the bloody plain;
He strives to rise—Brave Musgrave, no!
Thence never shalt thou rise again!
He chokes in blood—some friendly hand
Undo the visor's barred band,
Unfix the gorget's iron clasp,
And give him room for life to gasp!
O, bootless aid!—Haste, holy friar,
Haste, ere the sinner shall expire!
Of all his guilt let him be shriven,
And smooth his path from earth to heaven!

* A martial piece of music, adapted to the bagpipes.
† See p. 11. Stanza XXIII.

XXIII.

In haste the holy friar sped;—
His naked foot was died with red,
As through the lists he ran:
Unmindful of the shouts on high,
That hailed the conqueror's victory,
He raised the dying man;
Loose waved his silver beard and hair,
As o'er him he kneeled down in prayer;
And still the crucifix on high
He holds before his darkening eye;
And still he bends an anxious ear,
His faltering penitence to hear;
Still props him from the bloody sod;
Still, even when soul and body part,
Pours ghostly comfort on his heart,
And bids him trust in God!
Unheard he prays;—the death-pang's o'er!
Richard of Musgrave breathes no more.

XXIV.

As if exhausted in the fight,
Or musing o'er the piteous sight,
The silent victor stands:
His beaver did he not unclasp,
Marked not the shouts, felt not the grasp
Of gratulating hands.
When, lo! strange cries of wild surprise,
Mingled with seeming terror, rise
Among the Scottish bands;
And all, amid the throng'd array,
In panic haste gave open way
To a half-naked ghastly man,
Who downward from the castle ran:
He crossed the barriers at a bound,
And wild and haggard looked around,
As dizzy, and in pain;
And all, upon the armed ground,
Knew William of Deloraine!
Each ladye sprung from seat with speed;
Vaulted each marshal from his steed;
"And who art thou," they cried,
"Who hast this battle fought and won?"
His plumed helm was soon undone—
"Cranstoun of Teviot-side!
For this fair prize I've fought and won:"—
And to the Ladye led her son.

XXV.

Full oft the rescued boy she kissed,
And often pressed him to her breast;
For, under all her dauntless show,
Her heart had throbbed at every blow;
Yet not lord Cranstoun deigned she greet,
Though low he kneeled at her feet.
Me list not tell what words were made,
What Douglas, Home, and Howard said—
—For Howard was a generous foe—
And how the clan united prayed,
The Ladye would the feud forego,
And deign to bless the nuptial hour
Of Cranstoun's lord and Teviot's Flower.

XXVI.

She looked to river, looked to hill,
Thought on the spirit's prophesy,
Then broke her silence stern and still,—
"Not you, but Fate, has vanquished me;
Their influence kindly stars may shower
On Teviot's tide and Branksome's tower,
For pride is quelled, and love is free."
She took fair Margaret by the hand,
Who, breathless, trembling, scarce might stand;
That hand to Cranstoun's lord gave she:—
"As I am true to thee and thine,
Do thou be true to me and mine!
This clasp of love our bond shall be,
For this is your betrothing day,
And all these noble lords shall stay,
To grace it with their company."

XXVII.

All as they left the listed plain,
Much of the story she did gain;
How Cranstoun fought with Deloraine,
And of his page, and of the book
Which from the wounded knight he took;
And how he sought her castle high,
That morn, by help of gramarye;
How, in Sir William's armour dight,
Stolen by his page, while slept the knight,
He took on him the single fight.
But half his tale he left unsaid,
And lingered till he joined the maid.—
Cared not the Ladye to betray
Her mystic arts in view of day;
But well she thought, ere midnight came,
Of that strange page the pride to tame,
From his foul hands the book to save,
And send it back to Michael's grave.—
Needs not to tell each tender word
'Twixt Margaret and 'twixt Cranstoun's lord;
Nor how she told of former woes,
And how her bosom fell and rose,
While he and Musgrave bandied blows.—
Needs not these lovers' joys to tell;
One day, fair maids, you'll know them well.

XXVIII.

William of Deloraine, some chance
Had wakened from his deathlike trance;
And taught that, in the listed plain,
Another, in his arms and shield,
Against fierce Musgrave axe did wield,
Under the name of Deloraine.
Hence, to the field, unarmed, he ran,
And hence his presence scared the clan,
Who held him for some fleeting wraith,*
And not a man of blood and breath.
Not much this new ally he loved,
Yet, when he saw what hap had proved,
He greeted him right heartilie:
He would not waken old debate,
For he was void of rancorous hate,
Though rude, and scant of courtesy.
In raids he spilt but seldom blood,
Unless when men at arms withstood,
Or, as was meet, for deadly feud.
He ne'er bore grudge for stalwart blow,
Ta'en in fair fight from gallant foe:
And so 'twas seen of him, e'en now,
When on dead Musgrave he looked down;
Grief darkened on his rugged brow,
Though half disguised with a frown;
And thus, while sorrow bent his head,
His foeman's epitaph he made.

XXIX.

"Now, Richard Musgrave, liest thou here!
I ween, my deadly enemy;
For, if I slew thy brother dear,
Thou slewest a sister's son to me;
And when I lay in dungeon dark,
Of Naworth Castle, long months three,
Till ransomed for a thousand mark,
Dark Musgrave, it was long of thee.

* The spectral apparition of a living person.

And, Musgrave, could our fight be tried,
And thou wert now alive, as I,
No mortal man should us divide,
Till one, or both of us, did die.
Yet rest thee, God! for well I know
I ne'er shall find a nobler foe.
In all the northern counties here,
Whose word is snafle, spur, and spear,*
Thou wert the best to follow gear.
'Twas pleasure, as we looked behind,
To see how thou the chase couldst wind,
Cheer the dark blood-hounds on his way,
And with the bugle rouse the fray!
I'd give the lands of Deloraine,
Dark Musgrave were alive again."—

XXX.

So mourned he, till lord Dacre's band
Were bowning back to Cumberland.
They raised brave Musgrave from the field,
And laid him on his bloody shield;
On levelled lances, four and four,
By turns, the noble burden bore.
Before, at times, upon the gale,
Was heard the Minstrel's plaintive wail;
Behind, four priests, in sable stole,
Sung requiem for the warrior's soul:
Around, the horsemen slowly rode;
With trailing pikes the spearmen trode;
And thus the gallant knight they bore,
Through Liddesdale, to Leven's shore;
Thence to Holme Coltrame's lofty nave,
And laid him in his father's grave.

The harp's wild notes, though hushed the song,
The mimic march of death prolong;
Now seems it far, and now a-near,
Now meets, and now eludes the ear;
Now seems some mountain side to sweep,
Now faintly dies in valley deep;
Seems now as if the Minstrel's wail,
Now the sad requiem loads the gale:
Last, o'er the warrior's closing grave,
Rung the full choir in choral stave.
After due pause, they bade him tell,
Why he, who touched the harp so well,
Should thus, with ill-rewarded toil,
Wander a poor and thankless soil,
When the more generous southern land
Would well requite his skilful hand.

The aged harper, howsoe'er
His only friend, his harp, was dear,
Liked not to hear it ranked so high
Above his flowing poesy;
Less liked he still, that scornful jeer
Misprized the land he loved so dear;
High was the sound, as thus again
The bard resumed his Minstrel strain.

CANTO VI.

I.

Beathes there the man, with soul so dead,[1]
Who never to himself hath said,
This is my own, my native land!
Whose heart hath ne'er within him burned,
As home his footsteps he hath turned,
From wandering on a foreign strand?
If such there breathe, go, mark him well;
For him no Minstrel raptures swell;
High though his titles, proud his name,
Boundless his wealth as wish can claim;
Despite those titles, power, and pelf,
The wretch, concentred all in self,
Living, shall forfeit fair renown,
And, doubly dying, shall go down
To the vile dust, from whence he sprung,
Unwept, unhonoured, and unsung.

II.

O Caledonia! stern and wild,
Meet nurse for a poetic child!
Land of brown heath and shaggy wood,
Land of the mountain and the flood,
Land of my sires! what mortal hand
Can e'er untie the filial band,
That knits me to thy rugged strand!
Still, as I view each well-known scene,
Think what is now, and what hath been,
Seems as, to me, of all bereft,
Sole friends thy woods and streams are left:
And thus I love them better still,
Even in extremity of ill.
By Yarrow's stream still let me stray,
Though none should guide my feeble way;
Still feel the breeze down Ettrick break,
Although it chill my withered cheek;
Still lay my head by Teviot's stone,
Though there, forgotten and alone,
The bard may draw his parting groan.

III.

Not scorned like me! to Branksome Hall
The minstrels came, at festive call:
Trooping they came, from near and far,
The jovial priests of mirth and war;
Alike for feast and fight prepared,
Battle and banquet both they shared.
Of late, before each martial clan,
They blew their death-note in the van,
But now, for every merry mate,
Rose the portcullis' iron grate;
They sound the pipe, they strike the string,
They dance, they revel, and they sing,
Till the rude turrets shake and ring.

IV.

Me lists not at this tide declare
The splendour of the spousal rite,
How mustered in the chapel fair
Both maid and matron, squire and knight;
Me lists not tell of owches rare,
Of mantles green, and braided hair,
And kirtles furred with miniver;
What plumage waved the altar round,
How spurs, and ringing chainlets, sound:
And hard it were for bard to speak
The changeful hue of Margaret's cheek;
That lovely hue which comes and flies,
As awe and shame alternate rise.

V.

Some bards have sung, the ladye high
Chapel or altar came not nigh;
Nor durst the rites of spousal grace,
So much she feared each holy place.
False slanders these;—I trust right well,
She wrought not by forbidden spell;[2]
For mighty words and signs have power
O'er sprites in planetary hour:
Yet scarce I praise their venturous part,
Who tamper with such dangerous art:

* The lands that over Ouse to Berwick forth do bear,
Have for their blazon had, the snafle, spur, and spear.
Poly-Albion, Song xiii.

But this for faithful truth I say,
The Ladye by the altar stood,
Of sable velvet her array,
And on her head a crimson hood,
With pearls embroidered and entwined,
Guarded with gold, with ermine lined;
A merlin sat upon her wrist,[3]
Held by a leash of silken twist.

VI.

The spousal rites were ended soon:
'Twas now the merry hour of noon,
And in the lofty arched hall
Was spread the gorgeous festival.
Steward and squire, with heedful haste,
Marshalled the rank of every guest;
Pages, with ready blade, were there,
The mighty meal to carve and share:
O'er capon, heron-shew, and crane,
And princely peacock's gilded train,[4]
And o'er the boar-head,[5] garnished brave,
And eygnet[5] from St. Mary's wave;[6]
O'er ptarmigan and venison,
The priest had spoke his benison;
Then rose the riot and the din,
Above, beneath, without, within!
For, from the lofty balcony,
Rung trumpet, shalm, and psaltery;
Their clanging bowls old warriors quaffed,
Loudly they spoke, and loudly laughed;
Whispered young knights, in tone more mild,
To ladies fair, and ladies smiled.
The hooded hawks, high perched on beam,
The clamour joined with whistling scream,
And flapped their wings, and shook their bells,
In concert with the stag-hounds' yells.
Round go the flasks of ruddy wine,
From Bordeaux, Orleans, or the Rhine;
Their tasks the busy sewers ply,
And all is mirth and revelry.

VII.

The goblin page, omitting still
No opportunity of ill,
Strove now, while blood ran hot and high,
To rouse debate and jealousy;
Till Conrad, lord of Wolfenstein,
By nature fierce, and warm with wine,
And now in humour highly crossed,
About some steeds his band had lost,
High words to words succeeding still,
Smote, with his gauntlet, stout Hunthil;[7]
A hot and hardy Rutherford,
Whom men call Dickon Draw-the-sword.
He took it on the page's saye,
Hunthil had driven these steeds away.
Then Howard, Home, and Douglas rose,
The kindling discord to compose:
Stern Rutherford right little said,
But bit his glove and shook his head.—[8]
A fortnight thence, in Inglewood,
Stout Conrad, cold, and drenched in blood,
His bosom gored with many a wound,
Was by a woodman's lyme-dog found;
Unknown the manner of his death,
Gone was his brand, both sword and sheath;
But ever from that time, 'twas said,
That Dickon wore a Cologne blade.

VIII.

The dwarf, who feared his master's eye
Might his foul treachery, espie,
Now sought the castle buttery,
Where many a yoeman, bold and free,
Revelled as merrily and well
As those that sat in lordly selle.
Watt Tinlinn, there, did frankly raise
The pledge to Arthur Fire-the-braes;[9]
And he, as by his breeding bound,
To Howard's merry men sent it round.
To quit them, on the English side,
Red Roland Forster loudly cried,
"A deep carouse to yon fair bride!"
At every pledge, from vat and pail,
Foamed forth, in floods, the nut-brown ale;
While shout the riders every one,
Such day of mirth ne'er cheered their clan,
Since old Buccleuch the name did gain,
When in the cleuch the buck was ta'en.[10]

IX.

The wily page, with vengeful thought,
Remembered him of Tinlinn's yew,
And swore, it should be dearly bought,
That ever he the arrow drew.
First, he the yeoman did molest,
With bitter gibe, and taunting jest;
Told, how he fled at Solway strife,
And how Hob Armstrong cheered his wife:
Then, shunning still his powerful arm,
At unawares he wrought him harm;
From trencher stole his choicest cheer,
Dashed from his lips his can of beer;
Then, to his knee sly creeping on,
With bodkin pierced him to the bone:
The venomed wound, and festering joint,
Long after rued that bodkin's point.
The startled yeoman swore and spurned,
And board and flaggons overturned,
Riot and clamour wild began;
Back to the hall the urchin ran;
Took in a darkling nook his post,
And grinned, and muttered, "Lost! lost! lost!"

X.

By this, the Dame, lest farther fray
Should mar the concord of the day,
Had bid the Minstrels tune their lay.
And first stept forth old Albert Græme,[11]
The Minstrel of that ancient name:
Was none who struck the harp so well,
Within the Land Debateable;
Well friended too, his hardy kin,
Whoever lost, were sure to win;
They sought the beeves, that made their broth,
In Scotland and in England both.
In homely guise, as nature bade,
His simple song the Borderer said.

XI.

ALBERT GRÆME.

It was an English ladye bright,
(The sun shines fair on Carlisle wall,)[12]
And she would marry a Scottish knight,
For Love will still be lord of all.

Blithly they saw the rising sun,
When he shone fair on Carlisle wall,
But they were sad ere day was done,
Though Love was still the lord of all.

Her sire gave brooch and jewel fine,
Where the sun shines fair on Carlisle wall:
Her brother gave but a flask of wine,
For ire that Love was lord of all.

For she had lands, both meadow and lea,
Where the sun shines fair on Carlisle wall,
And he swore her death, ere he would see
A Scottish knight the lord of all!

XII.

That wine she had not tasted well,
(The sun shines fair on Carlisle wall,)
When dead, in her true love's arms, she fell,
For Love was still the lord of all.

He pierced her brother to the heart,
Where the sun shines fair on Carlisle wall;—
So perish all, would true love part,
That Love may still be lord of all.

And then he took the cross divine,
Where the sun shines fair on Carlisle wall,
And he died for her sake in Palestine,
So Love was still the lord of all.

Now all ye lovers, that faithful prove,
(The sun shines fair on Carlisle wall,)
Pray for their souls who died for love,
For Love shall still be lord of all!

XIII.

As ended Albert's simple lay,
Arose a bard of loftier port;
For sonnet, rhyme, and roundelay,
Renowned in haughty Henry's court:
There rung thy harp, unrivalled long,
Fitztraver of the silver song!
The gentle Surrey loved his lyre—
Who has not heard of Surrey's fame?[13]
His was the hero's soul of fire,
And his, the bard's immortal name,
And his was love, exalted high
By all the glow of chivalry.

XIV.

They sought, together, climes afar,
And oft within some olive grove,
When evening came, with twinkling star,
They sung of Surrey's absent love.
His step the Italian peasant staid,
And deemed, that spirits from on high,
Round where some hermit saint was laid,
Were breathing heavenly melody;
So sweet did harp and voice combine,
To praise the name of Geraldine.

XV.

Fitztraver! O what tongue may say
The pangs thy faithful bosom knew,
When Surrey, of the deathless lay,
Ungrateful Tudor's sentence slew!
Regardless of the tyrant's frown,
His harp called wrath and vengeance down.
He left, for Naworth's iron towers,
Windsor's green glades, and courtly bowers,
And, faithful to his patron's name,
With Howard still Fitztraver came:
Lord William's foremost favourite he,
And chief of all his mistrelsy.

XVI.

FITZTRAVER.

'Twas All-soul's eve, and Surrey's heart beat high:
He heard the midnight bell with anxious start,
Which told the mystic hour, approaching nigh,
When wise Cornelius promised, by his art,
To show to him the ladye of his heart,
Albeit betwixt them roared the ocean grim;
Yet so the sage had hight to play his part,
That he should see her form in life and limb,
And mark, if still she loved, and still she thought of him.

XVII.

Dark was the vaulted room of gramarye,
To which the wizard led the gallant knight,
Save that before a mirror, huge and high,
A hallowed taper shed a glimmering light
On mystic implements of magic might;
On cross, and character, and talisman,
And almagest, and altar,—nothing bright;
For fitful was the lustre, pale and wan,
As watch-light by the bed of some departing man.

XVIII.

But soon, within that mirror huge and high,
Was seen a self-emitted light to gleam;
And forms upon its breast the earl 'gan spy,
Cloudy and indistinct as feverish dream;
Till, slow arranging, and defined, they seem
To form a lordly and a lofty room,
Part lighted by a lamp with silver beam,
Placed by a couch of Agra's silken loom,
And part by moonshine pale, and part was hid in gloom.

XIX.

Fair all the pageant—but how passing fair
The slender form, which lay on couch of Ind!
O'er her white bosom strayed her hazel hair,
Pale her dear cheek, as if for love she pined;
All in her night-robe loose she lay reclined,
And, pensive, read from tablet eburnine
Some strain that seemed her inmost soul to find:—
That favour'd strain was Surrey's raptured line,
That fair and lovely form, the Ladye Geraldine.

XX.

Slow rolled the clouds upon the lovely form,
And swept the goodly vision all away—
So royal envy rolled the murky storm
O'er my beloved master's glorious day.
Thou jealous, ruthless tyrant! Heaven repay
On thee, and on thy children's latest line,
The wild caprice of thy despotic sway,
The gory bridal bed, the plundered shrine,
The murdered Surrey's blood, the tears of Geraldine!

XXI.

Both Scots, and Southern chiefs prolong
Applauses of Fitztraver's song:
These hated Henry's name as death,
And those still held the ancient faith.—
Then, from his seat, with lofty air,
Rose Harold, bard of brave St. Clair;
St. Clair, who, feasting high at Home
Had with that lord to battle come.
Harold was born where restless seas
Howl round the storm-swept Orcades;
Where erst St. Clairs[14] held princely sway
O'er isle and islet, strait and bay;—
Still nods their palace to its fall,
Thy pride and sorrow, fair Kirkwall![15]
Thence oft he marked fierce Pentland rave,
As if grim Odin rode her wave;
And watched, the whilst, with visage pale,
And throbbing heart, the struggling sail;
For all of wonderful and wild
Had rapture for the lonely child.

XXII.

And much of wild and wonderful
In these rude isles mighty Fancy cull;
For thither came, in times afar,
Stern Lochlin's sons of roving war,
The Norsemen, trained to spoil and blood,
Skilled to prepare the raven's food;
Kings of the main their leaders brave,
Their barks the dragons of the wave.[16]
And there, in many a stormy vale,
The scald had told his wonderous tale:

And many a Runic column high
Had witnessed grim idolatry.
And thus had Harold, in his youth,
Learned many a saga's rhyme uncouth,—
Of that sea-snake,[17] tremendous curled,
Whose monstrous circle girds the world;
Of those dread Maids, whose hideous yell
Maddens the battle's bloody swell;[18]
Of chiefs, who, guided through the gloom
By the pale death-lights of the tomb,
Ransacked the graves of warriors old,
Their falchions[19] wrenched from corpses' hold,
Waked the deaf tomb with war's alarms,
And bade the dead arise to arms!
With war and wonder all on flame,
To Roslin's bowers young Harold came,
Where, by sweet glen and greenwood tree,
He learned a milder minstrelsy;
Yet something of the northern spell
Mixed with the softer numbers well.

XXIII.

HAROLD.

O listen, listen, ladies gay!
No haughty feat of arms I tell;
Soft is the note, and sad the lay,
That mourns the lovely Rosabelle.[20]

—"Moor, moor the barge, ye gallant crew!
And, gentle ladye, deign to stay!
Rest thee in castle Ravensheuch,[21]
Nor tempt the stormy firth to-day.

"The blackning wave is edged with white;
To inch* and rock the sea-mews fly;
The fishers have heard the water sprite,
Whose screams forbode that wreck is nigh.

"Last night the gifted seer did view
A wet shroud swathe a ladye gay;
Then stay thee, Fair, in Ravensheuch:
Why cross the gloomy firth to-day?"

"'Tis not because lord Lindesay's heir
To night at Roslin leads the ball,
But that my ladye-mother there
Sits lonely in her castle-hall.

"'Tis not because the ring they ride,
And Lindesay at the ring rides well,
But that my sire the wine will chide,
If 'tis not filled by Rosabelle."

O'er Roslin all that dreary night
A wonderous blaze was seen to gleam:
'Twas broader than the watch-fire light,
And redder than the bright moon-beam.

It glared on Roslin's castled rock,
It ruddied all the copse-wood glen;
'Twas seen from Dryden's groves of oak,
And seen from caverned Hawthornden.

Seemed all on fire that chapel proud,
Where Roslin's chiefs uncoffined lie;
Each baron, for a sable shroud,
Sheathed in his iron panoply.[22]

Seemed all on fire, within, around,
Deep sacristy and altar's pale:
Shone every pillar foliage bound,
And glimmered all the dead-men's mail.

Blazed battlement and pinnet high,
Blazed every rose-carved buttress fair—

So still they blaze, when fate is nigh
The lordly line of high St. Clair.

There are twenty of Roslin's barons bold
Lie buried within that proud chapelle:
Each one the holy vault doth hold—
But the sea holds lovely Rosabelle!

And each St. Clair was buried there,
With candle, with book, and with knell;
But the sea caves rung, and the wild winds sung
The dirge of lovely Rosabelle.

XXIV.

So sweet was Harold's piteous lay,
Scarce marked the guests the darkened hall,
Though, long before the sinking day,
A wonderous shade involved them all;
It was not eddying mist or fog,
Drained by the sun from fen or bog;
Of no eclipse had sages told;
And yet, as it came on apace,
Each one could scarce his neighbour's face,
Could scarce his own stretched hand behold.
A secret horror checked the feast,
And chilled the soul of every guest;
Even the high dame stood half aghast,
She knew some evil on the blast;
The elvish page fell to the ground,
And, shuddering, muttered, "Found, found, found!"

XXV.

Then sudden, through the darkened air
A flash of lightning came;
So broad, so bright, so red the glare,
The castle seemed on flame;
Glanced every rafter of the hall,
Glanced every shield upon the wall;
Each trophied beam, each sculptured stone,
Were instant seen, and instant gone;
Full through the guests' bedazzled band
Resistless flashed the levin-brand,
And filled the hall with smouldering smoke,
As on the elfish page it broke.
It broke, with thunder long and loud,
Dismayed the brave, appalled the proud,
From sea to sea the larum rung;
On Berwick wall, and at Carlisle withal,
To arms the startled warders sprung.
When ended was the dreadful roar,
The elfish dwarf was seen no more!

XXVI.

Some heard a voice in Brauksome Hall,
Some saw a sight, not seen by all;
That dreadful voice was heard by some,
Cry, with loud summons, "GYLBIN, COME!"[23]
And on the spot where burst the brand,
Just where the page had flung him down,
Some saw an arm, and some a hand,
And some the waving of a gown.
The guests in silence prayed and shook,
And terror dimmed each lofty look.
But none of all the astonished train
Was so dismayed as Deloraine;
His blood did freeze, his brain did burn,
'Twas feared his mind would ne'er return;
For he was speechless, ghastly, wan,
Like him of whom the story ran,
Who spoke the spectre-hound in Man.[24]
At length, by fits, he darkly told,
With broken hint, and shuddering cold—
That he had seen, right certainly,

* *Inch*, Isle.

A shape with amice wrapped around,
With a wrought Spanish baldrick bound,
Like pilgrim from beyond the sea;
And knew—but how it mattered not—
It was the wizard, Michael Scott!

XXVII.

The anxious crowd, with horror pale,
All trembling, heard the wonderous tale.
No sound was made, no word was spoke,
Till noble Angus silence broke:
And he a solemn sacred plight
Did to St. Bride[25] of Douglas make,
That he a pilgrimage would take,
To Melrose Abbey, for the sake
Of Michael's restless sprite.
Then each, to ease his troubled breast,
To some blessed saint his prayers addressed;
Some to St. Modan made their vows,
Some to St. Mary of the Lowes,
Some to the holy Rood of Lisle,
Some to our ladye of the Isle;
Each did his patron witness make,
That he such pilgrimage would take,
And monks should sing, and bells should toll,
All for the weal of Michael's soul.
While vows were ta'en, and prayers were prayed,
'Tis said the noble dame, dismayed,
Renounced, for aye, dark migic's aid.

XXVIII.

Nought of the bridal will I tell,
Which after in short space befell;
Nor how brave sons and daughters fair
Blessed Teviot's flower, and Cranstoun's heir:
After such dreadful scene, 'twere vain,
To wake the note of mirth again.
More meet it were to mark the day
Of penitence and prayer divine,
When pilgrim-chiefs, in sad array,
Sought Melrose' holy shrine.

XXIX.

With naked foot, and sackcloth vest,
And arms enfolded on his breast,
Did every pilgrim go;
The standers-by might hear uneath,
Footstep, or voice, or high-drawn breath,
Through all the lengthened row:
No lordly look, nor martial stride,
Gone was their glory, sunk their pride,
Forgotten their renown;
Silent and slow, like ghosts, they glide
To the high altar's hallowed side,
And there they knelt them down;
Above the suppliant chieftains wave
The banners of departed brave;
Beneath the lettered stones were laid
The ashes of their fathers dead;
From many a garnished niche around,
Stern saints, and tortured martyrs frowned.

XXX.

And slow up the dim aisle afar,
With sable cowl and scapular,
And snow white-stoles, in order due,
The holy fathers, two and two,
In long procession came;
Taper, and host, and book they bare,
And holy banner, flourished fair
With the Redeemer's name:
Above the prostrate pilgrim band
The mitred abbot stretched his hand,
And blessed them as they kneeled;
With holy eross he signed them all,
And prayed they might be sage in hall,
And fortunate in field.
The mass was sung, and prayers were said,
And solemn requiem for the dead;
And bells tolled out their mighty peal
For the departed spirit's weal;
And ever in the office close
The hymn of intercession rose;
And far the echoing aisles prolong
The awful burthen of the song,—
DIES IRÆ, DIES ILLA,
SOLVET SÆCLUM IN FAVILLA:
While the pealing organ rung;
Were it meet with sacred strain
To close my lay, so light and vain,
Thus the holy fathers sung.

XXXI.

HYMN FOR THE DEAD.

That day of wrath, that dreadful day,
When heaven and earth shall pass away,
What power shall be the sinner's stay?
How shall he meet that dreadful day?

When, shrivelling like a parched scroll,
The flaming heavens together roll;
When louder yet, and yet more dread,
Swells the high trump that wakes the dead!

Oh! on that day, that wrathful day,
When man to judgment wakes from clay,
Be THOU the trembling sinner's stay,
Though heaven and earth shall pass away!

HUSHED is the harp—the minstrel gone.
And did he wander forth alone?
Alone, in indigence and age,
To linger out his pilgrimage?
No:—close beneath proud Newark's tower
Arose the minstrel's lowly bower:
A simple hut; but there was seen
The little garden hedged with green,
The cheerful hearth, and lattice clean.
There sheltered wanderers, by the blaze,
Oft heard the tale of other days;
For much he loved to ope his door,
And give the aid he begged before.
So passed the winter's day; but still,
When summer smiled on sweet Bowhill,
And July's eve, with balmy breath,
Waved the blue bells on Newark heath;
When throstles sung in Hare-head shaw,
And corn was green on Carterhaugh,
And flourished, broad, Blackandro's oak,
The aged harper's soul awoke!
Then would he sing achievements high,
And circumstance of chivalry,
Till the rapt traveller would stay,
Forgetful of the closing day:
And noble youths, the strain to hear,
Forsook the hunting of the deer;
And Yarrow, as he rolled along,
Bore burden to the Minstrel's song.

NOTES TO CANTO I.

1. The feast was over in Branksome tower.—*P.* 2.

In the reign of James I, sir William Scott of Buccleuch, chief of the clan bearing that name, exchanged, with sir Thomas Inglis of Manor, the estate of Murdiestone, in Lanarkshire, for one half

of the barony of Branksome, or Branxholm,* lying upon the Teviot, about three miles above Hawick. He was probably induced to this transaction from the vicinity of Branksome to the extensive domain which he possessed in Ettrick Forest and in Teviotdale. In the former district he held by occupancy the estate of Buccleuch,† and much of the forest land on the river Ettrick. In Teviotdale, he enjoyed the barony of Eckford, by a grant from Robert II, to his ancestor, Walter Scott of Kirkurd, for the apprehending of Gilbert Ridderford, confirmed by Robert III, 3d May, 1424. Tradition imputes the exchange betwixt Scott and Inglis to a conversation, in which the latter, a man, it would appear, of a mild and forbearing nature, complained much of the injuries which he was exposed to from the English Borderers, who frequently plundered his lands of Branksome. Sir William Scott instantly offered him the estate of Murdiestone, in exchange for that which was subject to such egregious inconvenience. When the bargain was completed, he drily remarked, that the cattle in Cumberland were as good as those of Teviotdale; and proceeded to commence a system of reprisals upon the English, which was regularly pursued by his successors. In the next reign, James II granted to sir Walter Scott of Branksome, and to sir David, his son, the remaining half of the barony of Branksome, to be held in blanche for the payment of a red rose. The cause assigned for the grant is, their brave and faithful exertions in favour of the king against the house of Douglas, with whom James had been recently tugging for the throne of Scotland. This charter is dated the 2d February, 1443; and, in the same month, part of the barony of Langholm, and many lands in Lanarkshire, were conferred upon sir Walter and his son by the same monarch.

After the period of the exchange with sir Thomas Inglis, Branksome became the principal seat of the Buccleuch family. The castle was enlarged and strengthened by sir David Scott, the grandson of sir William, its first possessor. But in 1570-1, the vengeance of Elizabeth, provoked by the inroads of Buccleuch, and his attachment to the cause of Queen Mary, destroyed the castle, and laid waste the lands of Branksome. In the same year the castle was repaired, and enlarged by sir Walter Scott, its brave possessor; but the work was not completed until after his death, in 1574, when the widow finished the building. This appears from the following inscription. Around a stone, bearing the arms of Scott of Buccleuch, appears the following legend:

"*Sir W. Scott, of Branxheim Knyt Voc of Sir William Scott of Kirkurd Knyt began ye work upon ye* 24 *of Marche* 1571 *zier quha departit at God's pleisour ye* 17 *April* 1574."

On a similar compartment are sculptured the arms of Douglas, with this inscription, "*Dame Margaret Douglas his spous completit the forsaid work in October*, 1576." Over an arched door is inscribed the following moral verse:—

In varld is nocht nature hes brought
yat sal lest ay.
tharfore serve God keip veil ye rod thy
fame sal nocht dekay.
Sir Walter Scott of Branxholm Knight.
Margaret Douglas, 1571.

Branksome Castle continued to be the principal seat of the Buccleuch family, while security was any object in their choice of a mansion. It has since been the residence of the commissioners, or chamberlains, of the family. From the various alterations which the building has undergone, it is not only greatly restricted in its dimensions but retains little of the castellated form, if we except one square tower of massy thickness, the only part of the original building which now remains. The whole forms a handsome modern residence, lately inhabited by my deceased friend, Adam Oglivy, Esq. of Hartwoodmyres, commissioner of his grace the duke of Buccleuch.

The extent of the ancient edifice can still be traced by some vestiges of its foundation; and its strength is obvious from the situation on a steep bank surrounded by the Teviot, and flanked by a deep ravine, formed by a precipitous brook. It was anciently surrounded by wood, as appears from the survey of Roxburghshire, made for Pont's Atlas, and preserved in the advocates' Library. This wood was cut about fifty years ago, but is now replaced by the thriving plantations which have been formed by the late noble proprietor, for miles around the ancient mansion of his forefathers.

2. Nine-and-twenty knights of fame
Hung their shields in Branksome Hall.—P. 2.

The ancient barons of Buccleuch, both from feudal splendour, and from their frontier situation, retained in their household, at Branksome, a number of gentlemen of their own name, who held lands from their chief, for the military service of watching and warding his castle. Satchells tells us in his doggrel poetry,

No baron was better served into Britain;
The barons of Buckleugh they kept their call,
Four-and-twenty gentlemen in their hall,
All being of his name and kin;
Each two had a servant to wait upon him;
Before supper and dinner, most renowned,
The bells rung and the trumpets sowned,
And more than that, I do confess,
They kept four-and-twenty pensioners.
Think not I lie, nor do me blame,
For the pensioners I can all name:
There's men alive, elder than I,
They know if I speak truth, or lie;
Every pensioner a room* did gain,
For service done and to be done;
This I'll let the reader understand,
The name both of the men and land,
Which they possessed, it is of truth,
Both from the lairds and lords of Buckleugh.

Accordingly, dismounting from his Pegasus, Satchells gives us in prose, the names of twenty-four gentlemen, younger brothers of ancient families, who were pensioners to the house of Buccleuch, and describes the lands which each possessed for his Border service. In time of war with England, the garrison was doubtless augmented. Satchells adds, "These twenty-three pensioners, all of his own name of Scott, and Walter Gladstanes, of Whitelaw, a near cousin of my lord's, as aforesaid,

* Branxholm is the proper name of the barony; but Branksome has been adopted, as suitable to the pronunciation, and more proper for poetry.

† There are no vestiges of any building at Buccleuch, except the site of a chapel, where, according to a tradition current in the time of Scott of Satchells, many of the ancient barons of Buccleuch lie buried. There is also said to have been a mill near this solitary spot; an extraordinary circumstance, as little or no corn grows within several miles of Buccleuch. Satchells says it was used to grind corn for the hounds of the chieftain.

* *Room*, portion of land.

were ready on all occasions, when his honour pleased cause to advertise them. It is known to many of the country better than it is to me, that the rent of these lands, which the lairds and lords of Buccleuch did freely bestow upon their friends, will amount to above twelve or fourteen thousand merks a year."—*History of the Name of Scott*, p. 45. An immense sum in those times.

3. And with Jedwood-axe at saddle-bow.—P. 2.

"Of a truth," says Froissart, "the Scottish cannot boast great skill with the bow, but rather bear axes, with which, in time of need, they give heavy strokes." The Jedwood axe was a sort of partizan, used by horsemen, as appears from the arms of Jedburgh, which bear a cavalier mounted, and armed with this weapon. It is also called a Jedwood or Jeddart staff.

4. They watch against Southern force and guile,
Lest Scroope, or Howard, or Percy's powers,
Threaten Branksome's lordly towers,
From Warkworth, or Naworth, or merry Carlisle—P. 4.

Branksome Castle was continually exposed to the attacks of the English, both from its situation and the restless military disposition of its inhabitants, who were seldom on good terms with their neighbours. The following letter from the earl of Northumberland to Henry VIII, in 1533, gives an account of a successful inroad of the English, in which the country was plundered up to the gates of the castle, although the invaders failed in their principal object, which was, to kill, or make prisoner, the laird of Buccleuch. It occurs in the Cotton MS. *Calig.* B. VIII, f. 222.

"Pleaseth yt your most gracious highnes to be aduertised that my comptroller, with Raynald Carnaby, desyred licence of me to invade the realme of Scotland, for the annoysaunce of your highnes enemys, where they thought best exploit by theyme might be done, and to haue to concur withe theyme the inhatitants of Northumberland, suche as was toward me according to theyre assembly, and, as by theyre discrecions vpone the same they shulde thinke most convenient; and so they dyde mete vpon Monday, before nyght, being the iii day of this instant monethe, at Wawhope, upon northe Tyne water, above Tyndaill, where they were to the number of xv c men, and soo invadet Scotland, at the hour of viii of the clock at nyght, at a place called Whele Causay; and before xi of the clock dyd send forth a forrey of Tyndaill and Ryddisdaill and laide all the resydue in a bushment, and actyvely dyd set vpon a town called Branxholm, where the lord of Buclough dwellythe, and purposed themselves with a trayne for hym lyke to his accustomed manner, in rysynge to all frayes; albeit, that knyght he was not at home, and soo they brynt the said Branxholm, and other townes, as to say Whichestre, Whichestrehelme, and Whelley, and haid ordered theymeselfs soo that surdry of the said lord Buclough's servants, who dyd issue fourthe of his gates, was takyn prisoners. They dyd not leve one house, one stak of corne, nor one shyef, without the gate of the said lord Buclough vnbrynt; and thus scrimaged and frayed, supposing the lord of Buclough to be within iii or iiii myles to have trayned him to the bushment; and soo in the breyking of the day dyd the forrey and the bushment mete, and reculed homeward, making theyre way westward from theyre invasion to be over Lyddersdaill, as intending yf the fray from theyre furst entry by the Scotts waiches, or otherwyse by warnyng, shulde haue bene gyven to Gedworth and the countrey of Scotland theyreabout of theyre invasion; whiche Gedworth is from the Wheles Causay vi myles, that thereby the Scots shuld have cumen further vnto theyme, and more owte of ordre; and soo upon sundry good consideracions, before they entered Lyddersdaill, as well accompting the inhabitants of the same to be towards your highness, and to enforce theyme the more thereby, as alsoo to put an occasion of suspect to the kinge of Scotts and his counsaill, to be taken anenst theyme, amonges theymselves, maid proclamations, commanding, vpon payne of dethe, assurance to be for the said inhabitants of Lyddersdaill, without any prejudice or hurt to be done by any Inglysman vnto theyme, and soo in good ordre abowte the howre of ten of the clok before none, vpone Tewisday, dyd, pas through the said Lyddersdaill, when dyd come diverse of the said inhabitants there to my servauntes, under the said assurance, offering theymselfes with any service they couthe make; and thus, thanks be to Godde, your highnes' subjects, abowte the howre of xii of the clok at none the same daye, came into this youre highnes' realme, bringing wt theyme above xl Scottsmen prisoners, one of theyme named Scot, of the surname and kyn of the said lord of Buclough, and of his howsehold; they brought alsoo cce nowte, and above lx horses and mares, keeping in savetie frome losse or hurte all your said highnes subjects. There was alsoo a towne called Newbiggins, by divers fotmen of Tyndaill and Ryddesdaill, takyn vp of the nyght and spoyled, when was slayne ii Scottsmen of the said towne, and many Scotts there hurte; your highnes subjects was xiii myles within the ground of Scotlande, and is frome my house at Werkworth, above lx miles of the most evil passage, where great snawes dothe lye; heretofore the same townes now brynt hath not at any time in the mynd of man in any warrs, been enterprised unto nowe; your subjects were therto more encouraged for the better advancement of your highnes service, the said lord of Buclough beyng always a mortall enemy to this your graces realme, and he dyd say, within xiii days before, he would see who durst lye near hym; wt many other cruell words, the knowledge wherof was certainly haid to my said servaunts before theyre enterprice maid vppon him; most humbly beseeching your majesty, that your highnes thankes may concur vnto theyme, whose names be here enclosed, and to have in your most gracious memory, the payufull and diligent service of my pore servaunt Wharton, and thus, as I am most bounden, shall dispose wt them that be under me. f. . . . annoysaunce of your highnes enemys." In resentment of this foray, Buccleuch with other Border chiefs, assembled an army of 3000 riders, with which they penetrated into Northumberland, and laid waste the country as far as the banks of Bramish. They baffled, or defeated, the English forces opposed to them, and returned loaded with prey.—*Pinkerton's History*, Vol. II, p. 318.

5. Bards long shall tell,
How lord Walter fell.—St. VII, p. 3.

Sir Walter Scott of Buccleuch succeeded to his grandfather, sir David, in 1492. He was a brave and powerful baron, and warden of the west marches of Scotland. His death was the consequence of a feud betwixt the Scotts and Kerrs, the history of which is necessary to explain repeated allusions in the romance.

In the year 1526, in the words of Pitscottie,

"The earl of Angus and the rest of the Douglasses ruled all which they liked, and no man durst say the contrary; wherefore the king (James V, then a minor) was heavily displeased, and would fain have been out of their hands, if he might by any way. And, to that effect, wrote a quiet and secret letter with his own hand, and sent it to the laird of Buccleuch, beseeching him that he would come with his kin and friends, and all the force that he might be, and meet him at Melross, at his home-passing, and there to take him out of the Douglasses hands, and to put him at liberty, to use himself among the lave (*rest*) of his lords, as he thinks expedient.

"This letter was quietly directed and sent by one of the king's own secret servants, which was received very thankfully by the laird of Buccleuch, who was very glad thereof, to be put to such charges and familiarity with his prince, and did great diligence to perform the king's writing, and to bring the matter to pass as the king desired: And to that effect, convened all his kin and friends, and all that would do for him, to ride with him to Melross, when he knew of the king's home-coming. And so he brought with him six hundred spears, of Liddesdale, and Annandale, and countrymen, and clans thereabout, and held themselves quiet while that the king returned out of Jedburg, and came to Melross, to remain there all that night.

"But when the lord Hume, Cessford, and Fernyhirst, (the chiefs of the clan of Kerr,) took their leave of the king, and returned home, then appeared the lord of Buccleuch in sight, and his company with him, in an arrayed battle, intending to have fulfilled the king's petition, and therefore came stoutly forward on the back side of Haliden hill. By that the earl of Angus, with George Douglas his brother, and sundry other of his friends, seeing this army coming, they marvelled what the matter meant; while at the last they knew the laird of Buccleuch, with a certain company of the thieves of Annandale. With him they were less affeared, and made them manfully to the field contrary them, and said to the king in this manner, 'Sir, yon is Buccleuch, and thieves of Annandale with him, to unbeset your grace from the gate (*i. e.* interrupt your passage.) I vow to God they shall either fight or flee; and ye shall tarry here on this know, and my brother George with you, with any other company yon please; and I shall pass, and put yon thieves off the ground, and rid the gate unto your grace, or else die for it.' The king tarried still, as was devised, and George Douglas with him; and sundry other lords, such as the earl of Lennox and the lord Erskine, and some of the king's own servants; but all the lave (*rest*) passed with the earl of Angus to the field against the laird of Buccleuch, who joyned and countered cruelly both the said parties in the field of Darnefinver,* either against other, with uncertain victory. But at the last, the lord Hume hearing word of that matter how it stood, returned again to the king in all possible haste, with him the lairds of Cessford and Fairnyhirst, to the number of fourscore spears, and set freshly on the lap and wing of the laird of Buccleuch's field, and shortly bare them backward to the ground: which caused the laird of Buccleuch, and the rest of his friends, to go back and flee, whom they followed and chased: and especially the lairds of Cessford and Fairnyhirst followed furiously, till at the foot of a path the laird of Cessford was slain by the stroke of a spear by an Elliot, who was then servant to the laird of Buccleuch. But when the laird of Cessford was slain, the chase ceased. The earl of Angus returned again with great merriness and victory, and thanked God that he saved him from that chance, and passed with the king to Melross, where they remained all that night. On the morn they passed to Edinburgh with the king, who was very sad and dolorous of the slaughter of the laird of Cessford, and many other gentlemen and yeomen slain by the laird of Buccleuch, containing the number of fourscore and fifteen, which died in the defence of the king, and at the command of his writing."

I am not the first who has attempted to celebrate in verse the renown of this ancient baron, and his hazardous attempt to procure his sovereign's freedom. In a Scottish Latin poet we find the following verses:—

Valterius Scotus Balcluchius.

Egregio suscepto facinore libertate Regis, ac aliis rebus gestis clarus, sub *Jacobo* V. A°. Christi, 1526.

Intentata aliis, nullique audita priorum
Audet, nec pavidum morsve, metusve, quatit,
Libertatem alnis soliti transcribere Regis:
Subreptam hanc Regi restituisse paras,
Si vincis, quanta o succedunt præmia dextræ,
Sin victus, falsas spes jace, pone animam.
Hostica vis nocuit; stant altæ robora mentis
Atque deus. Vincet, Rege probante, fides.
Insita quæ animis virtus, quosque aerior ardor
Obsidet, obscuris nox premat an tenebris?

Heroes ex omni Historia Scotica lectissimi, Auctore Johan. Jonstonio, Abredonense Scoto, 1603.

In consequence of the battle of Melrose, there ensued a deadly feud betwixt the names of Scott and Kerr, which, in spite of all means used to bring about an agreement, raged for many years upon the Borders. Buccleuch was imprisoned, and his estates forfeited, in the year 1535, for levying war against the Kerrs, and restored by act of parliament, dated 15th March, 1542, during the regency of Mary of Lorraine. But the most signal act of violence, to which this quarrel gave rise, was the murder of sir Walter himself, who was slain by the Kerrs in the streets of Edinburgh, in 1552. This is the event allnded to in stanza VII; and the poem is supposed to open shortly after it had taken place.

The feud between these two families was not reconciled in 1596, when both chieftains paraded the streets of Edinburgh with their followers, and it was expected their first meeting would decide their quarrel. But on July 11th of the same year, Colvil, in a letter to Mr Bacon, informs him, "that there was great trouble upon the Borders, which would continue till order should be taken by the queen of England and the king, by reason of the two young Scots chieftains, Cessford and Bacclugh, and of the present necessity and scarcity of corn amongst the Scots Borderers and riders. That there had been a private quarrel betwixt these two lairds, on the Borders, which was like to have turned to blood; but the fear of the general trouble had reconciled them, and the injuries which they thought to have committed against each other, were now transferred upon England: not unlike that emulation in France between the baron de Biron and Mons. Jeverie, who, being both ambitious of honour, undertook more hazardous enterprises against the enemy, than they would have done if

* Darnwick, near Melrose. The place of conflict is still called Skinner's Field, from a corruption of *Skirmish Field*.

they had been at concord together."—*Birch's Memorials*, vol. ii, p. 67.

6. No! vainly to each holy shrine,
In mutual pilgrimage they drew.—P. 3.

Among other expedients resorted to for stanching the feud betwixt the Scotts and the Kerrs, there was a bond executed, in 1529, between the heads of each clan, binding themselves to perform reciprocally the four principal pilgrimages of Scotland, for the benefit of the souls of those of the opposite name who had fallen in the quarrel. This indenture is printed in the *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*, Vol. I. But either it never took effect, or else the feud was renewed shortly afterwards.

Such pactions were not uncommon in feudal times; and, as might be expected, they were often, as in the present case, void of the effect desired. When sir Walter Mauny, the renowned follower of Edward III, had taken the town of Ryoll, in Gascony, he remembered to have heard that his father lay there buried, and offered a hundred crowns to any one who could show him his grave. A very old man appeared before sir Walter and informed him of the manner of his father's death, and the place of his sepulture. It seems the lord of Mauny had, at a great tournament, unhorsed, and wounded to the death, a Gascon knight, of the house of Mirepoix, whose kinsman was bishop of Cambray. For this deed he was held at feud by the relations of the knight, until he agreed to undertake a pilgrimage to the shrine of St. James of Compostella, for the benefit of the soul of the deceased. But as he returned through the town of Ryoll, after the accomplishment of his vow, he was beset, and treacherously slain, by the kindred of the knight whom he had killed. Sir Walter, guided by the old man, visited the lowly tomb of his father; and, having read the inscription, which was in Latin, he caused the body to be raised, and transported to his native city of Valenciennes, where masses were, in the days of Froissart, duly said for the soul of the unfortunate pilgrim.—*Cronycle of Froissart*, Vol. I, p. 123.

7. While Cessford owns the rule of Car.—P. 3.

The family of Ker, Kerr, or Car,* was very powerful on the Border. Fynes Morrison remarks, in his Travels, that their influence extended from the village of Preston-Grange, in Lothian, to the limits of England. Cessford Castle, the ancient baronial residence of the family, is situated near the village of Morebattle, within two or three miles of the Cheviot hills.—It has been a place of great strength and consequence, but is now ruinous. Tradition affirms, that it was founded by Halbert, or Habby Kerr, a gigantic warrior, concerning whom, many stories are current in Roxburgshire. The duke of Roxburghe represents Kerr of Cessford. A distinct and powerful branch of the same name own the marquis of Lothian as their chief. Hence the distinction betwixt Kers of Cessford and Fairnihirst.

8. Before lord Crastoun she should wed.—P. 3.

The Cranstouns, lord Cranstoun, are an ancient Border family, whose chief seat was at Crailling, in Teviotdale. They were at this time at feud with the clan of Scott; for it appears that the lady of Buccleuch, in 1557, beset the laird of Cranstoun, seeking his life. Nevertheless, the same Cranstoun, or perhaps, his son, was married to a daughter of the same lady.

9. Of Bethune's line of Picardie.—P. 3.

The Bethunes were of French origin, and derived their name from a small town in Artois. There were several distinguished families of the Bethunes in the neighbouring province of Picardy; they numbered among their descendants the celebrated Duc de Sully; and the name was accounted among the most noble in France, while aught noble remained in that country. The family of Bethune, or Beatoun, in Fife, produced three learned and dignified prelates; namely, Cardinal Beaton, and two successive archbishops of Glasgow, all of whom flourished about the date of the romance. Of this family was descended Dame Janet Beaton, lady Buccleuch, widow of sir Walter Scott of Branksome. She was a woman of masculine spirit, as appeared from her riding at the head of her son's clan, after her husband's murder. She also possessed the hereditary abilities of her family in such a degree, that the superstition of the vulgar imputed them to supernatural knowledge. With this was mingled, by faction, the foul accusation, of her having influenced queen Mary to the murder of her husband. One of the placards, preserved in Buchanan's Detection, accuses of Darnley's murder "the earl Bothwell, Mr. James Balfour, the persoun of Fliske, Mr. David Chalmers, black Mr. John Spens, who was principal deviser of the murder; and the quene, assenting thairto, throw the persuasion of the erle Bothwell, and *the witchcraft of lady Buckleuch.*"

10. He learn'd the art, that none may name,
In Padua far beyond the sea.—P. 3.

Padau was long supposed, by the Scottish peasants, to be the principal school of necromancy. The earl of Gowrie, slain at Perth, in 1600, pretended, during his studies in Italy, to have acquired some knowledge of the cabala: by which, he said, he could charm snakes, and work other miracles; and, in particular, could produce children without the intercourse of the sexes.—See the examination of Wemyss of Bogie, before the Privy Council, concerning Gowrie's conspiracy.

11. His form no darkening shadow traced
Upon the sunny wall.—P. 3.

The shadow of a necromancer is independent of the sun.—Glycas informs us that Simon Magus caused his shadow to go before him, making people believe it was an attendant spirit. *Heywood's Hierarchie*, p. 475. The vulgar conceive, that when a class of students have made a certain progress in their mystic studies, they are obliged to run through a subterraneous hall, where the devil literally catches the hindmost in the race, unless he crosses the hall so speedily, that the arch-enemy, can only apprehend his shadow. In the latter case, the person of the sage never after throws any shade; and those who have thus *lost their shadow*, always prove the best magicians.

12. The viewless forms of air.—P. 3.

The Scottish vulgar, without having any very defined notion of their attributes, believe in the existence of an intermediate class of spirits residing in the air, or in the waters: to whose agency they ascribe floods, storms, and all such phenomena as their own philosophy cannot readily explain. They are supposed to interfere in the affairs of mortals, sometimes with a malevolent purpose, and sometimes with milder views. It is said, for

* The name is spelt differently by the various families who bear it. Car is selected, not as the most correct, but as the most poetical reading.

example, that a gallant baron, having returned from the Holy Land to his castle of Drummelziar, found his fair lady nursing a healthy child, whose birth did not by any means correspond to the date of his departure. Such an occurrence, to the credit of the dames of the crusaders, be it spoken, was so rare, that it required a miraculous solution. The lady, therefore, was believed, when she averred confidently, that the Spirit of the Tweed had issued from the river while she was walking upon its bank, and compelled her to submit to his embraces; and the name of Tweedie was bestowed upon the child, who afterwards became baron of Drummelziar, and chief of a powerful clan. To those spirits were also ascribed, in Scotland, the

> —"Airy tongues, that syllable men's names,
> On sands, and shores, and desert wildernesses."

When the workmen were engaged in erecting the ancient church of Old Deer, in Aberdeenshire, upon a small hill called Bissau, they were surprised to find that the work was impeded by supernatural obstacles. At length the spirit of the River was heard to say,

> It is not here, it is not here,
> That ye shall build the church of Deer;
> But on Taptillery,
> Where many a corpse shall lie.

The site of the edifice was accordingly transferred to Taptillery, an eminence at some distance from the place where the building had been commenced.—*Macfarlane's MSS.* I mention these popular fables, because the introduction of the River and Mountain spirits may not, at first sight, seem to accord with the general tone of the romance, and the superstitions of the country where the scene is laid.

13. A fancied moss-trooper, &c. P. 4.

This was the usual appellation of the marauders upon the Borders; a profession diligently pursued by the inhabitants on both sides, and by none more actively and successfully than by Buccleuch's clan. Long after the union of the crowns, the moss-troopers, although sunk in reputation, and no longer enjoying the pretext of national hostility, continued to pursue their calling.

Fuller includes among the wonders of Cumberland, "The Moss-troopers; so strange in the condition of their living, if considered in their *Original*, *Increase*, *Height*, *Decay*, and *Ruine*.

First. "*Original*, I conceive them the same called Borderers in Mr. Cambden; and characterized by him to be *a wild and warlike people*. They are called *Moss-troopers*, because dwelling in the mosses, and riding in troops together. They dwell in the bounds, or meeting of the two kingdoms, but obey the laws of neither. They come to church as seldom as the 29th of February comes into the kalendar.

Second. "*Increase*. When England and Scotland were united in Great Britain, they that formerly lived by hostile incursions, betook themselves to the robbing of their neighbours. Their sons are free of the trade by their father's copy. They are like to Job, not in piety and patience, but in sudden plenty and poverty; sometimes having flocks and herds in the morning, none at night, and perchance many again next day. They may give for their mottoe, *vivitur ex rapto*, stealing from their honest neighbours what they sometimes require. They are a nest of hornets; strike one, and stir all of them about your ears. Indeed, if they promise safely to conduct a traveller, they will perform it with the fidelity of a Turkish janizary; otherwise, wo be to him that falleth into their quarters!

Third. "*Height*. Amounting, forty years since, to some thousands. These compelled the vicinage to purchase their security, by paying a constant rent to them. When in their greatest height, they had two great enemies—*the laws of the Land*, and the *Lord William Howard of Naworth*. He sent many of them to Carlisle, to that place where the officer *doth always his work by daylight*. Yet these moss-troopers, if possibly they could procure a pardon for a condemned person of their company, would advance great sums out of their common stock, who, in such a case, *Cast in their lots among themselves, and all have one purse*.

Fourth. "*Decay*. Caused by the wisdom, valour, and diligence, of the right honourable Charles lord Howard, earl of Carlisle who routed these English tories with his regiment. His severity unto them will not only be excused, but commended, by the judicious, who consider how our great lawyer doth describe such persons who are solemnly outlawed. *Bracton*, lib. 8. trac. 2. cap. 11: *Ex tunc gerunt caput lupinum, ita quod sine judiciali inquisitione rite pereant, et secum suum judicium portent, et merito sine lege pereunt, qui secundum legem vivere recusarunt.*—' Thenceforward, (after that they are outlawed) they wear a wolf's head, so that they lawfully may be destroyed, without any judicial inquisition, as who carry their own condemnation about them, and deservedly die without law, because they refuse to live according to law.'

Fifth. "*Ruine*. Such was the success of this worthy lord's severity, that he made a thorough reformation among them; and the ringleaders being destroyed, the rest are reduced to legal obedience, and so, I trust, will continue."—*Fuller's Worthies of England*, p. 216.

The last public mention of moss-troopers occurs during the civil wars of the seventeenth century, when many ordinances of parliament were directed against them.

> 14. How the brave boy, in future war,
> Should tame the Unicorn's pride,
> Exalt the Crescent and the Star.—P. 4.

The arms of the Kerrs of Cessford were, *Vert* on a cheveron, betwixt three unicorns' heads erased *argent*, three mullets *sable;* crest, a unicorn's head erased *proper*. The Scotts of Buccleuch bore, *Or*, on a bend azure, a star of six points betwixt two crescents of the first.

> 15. William of Deloraine.—P. 4.

The lands of Deloraine are joined to those of Buccleuch in Ettrick Forest. They were immemorially possessed by the Buccleuch family, under the strong title of occupancy, although no charter was obtained from the crown until 1545.—Like other possessions, the lands of Deloraine were occasionally granted by them to vassals, or kinsmen, for Border-service. Satchells mentions, among the twenty-four gentlemen pensioners of the family, "William Scott, commonly called *Cut-at-the-black*, who had the lands of Nether Deloraine for his service." And again, "This William of Deloraine, commonly called *Cut-at-the-Black*, was a brother of the ancient house of Haining, which house of Haining is descended from the ancient house of Hassendean." The lands of Deloraine now give an earl's title to the descendant of Henry, the second surviving son of the duchess of Buccleuch and Monmouth. I have endeavoured to

give William of Deloraine the attributes which characterized the Borderers of his day; for which I can only plead Froissart's apology, that "it behoveth, in a lynage, some to be folyshe and outrageous, to mayntene and sustayne the peasable." As a contrast to my Marchman, I beg leave to transcribe, from the same author, the speech of Amergot Marcell, a captain of the Adventurous Companions, a robber, and a pillager of the country of Auvergne, who had been bribed to sell his strong holds, and to assume a more honorable military life under the banners of the earl of Armagnac. But "when he remembered alle this, he was sorrowful; his tresour he thought he wolde not mynysshe: he was wonte daylay to serche for new pyllages, wherebye encresed his profyte, and then he sawe that alle was closed fro' him. Then he sayde and immagined, that to pyll and to robbe (all thynge considered) was a good lyfe, and so repented hym of his good doing. On a tyme, he said to his old companyons, 'Sirs, there is no sporte nor glory in this worlde amonge men of warre, but to use such lyfe as we have done in time past. What a joy was it to us when we rode forth at adventure, and sometyme found by the way a riche priour or merchaunt, or a route of mulettes of Mountpellyer, of Narbonne, of Lymens, of Fongans, of Besyers, of Tholous, or of Carcassone, laden with cloth of Brussels, or peltre ware comynge fro the fayres, or ladeu with spycery, fro Bruges, fro Damas, or fro Alysaundre; whatsoever we met, all was ours, or els ransoumed at our pleasures; dayly we gate new money, and the vyllaynes of Auvergne and of Lymosyn dayly provyded and brought to our castell whete mele, good wynes, beffes, and fat mottons, pullayne, and wylde foule. We were ever furnyshed as tho we had been kings. When we rode forthe, all the countrey trymbled for feare; all was ours goyng and comyng. Howe tok we Carlast, I and the Bourge of Compayne, and I and Perot of Bernoys took Caluset; how did we scale, with lytell ayde the strong castell of Marquell, pertayning to the erl Dolphyn; I kept it not past five days, but I receyved for it, on a feyre table, fiye thousande frankes, and forgave one thousande for the love of the erl Dolphyn's children. By my fayth, this was a fayre and a good lyfe: wherefore I repute myself sore deceyved, in that I have rendered up the fortress of Aloys; for it wolde have kept fro alle the worlde, and the daye, that I gave it up it was fournyshed with vytaylles, to have been kept seven yere without any re-vytaylynge. This erl of Armynake hath deceyved me. Olyve Barbe, and Perot le Bernoys, showed to me how I shulde repente myselfe; certayne I sore repente myself of what I have done."—*Froissart*, vol. ii, p. 195.

16. By wily turns, by desperate bounds,
Had baffled Percy's best blood-hounds.—P. 4.

The kings and heroes of Scotland, as well as the Border-riders, were sometimes obliged to study how to evade the pursuit of blood-hounds. Barbour informs us, that Robert Bruce was repeatedly tracked by sleuth-dogs. On one occasion, he escaped by wading a bow-shot down a brook, and ascending into a tree by a branch which overhung the water: thus leaving no trace on land of his footsteps, he baffled the scent. The pursuers came up:

Rycht to the burn thai passyt ware,
But the sleuth-hund made stinting thar,
And waneryt lang tyme ta and fra,
That he na certain gate couth ga;
Till at the last that John of Lorn,
Perseuit the hund the sleuth had lorne.
The Bruce, Book vii.

A sure way of stopping the dog was to spill blood upon the track, which destroyed the discriminating fineness of his scent. A captive was sometimes sacrificed on such occasions. Henry the minstrel tells a romantic story of Wallace, founded on this circumstance:—The hero's little band had been joined by an Irishman, named Fawdon, or Fadzean, a dark, savage, and suspicious character. After a sharp skirmish at Black-Erne Side, Wallace was forced to retreat with only sixteen followers. The English pursued with a border *sleuth-bratch*, or blood-hound:

In Gelderland there was that bratch it bred,
Siker of scent, to follow them that fled;
So was he used in Eske and Liddesdail,
While (i. e. till) she gat blood no fleeing might avail.

In the retreat, Fawdon, tired, or affecting to be so, would go no farther: Wallace, having in vain argued with him, in hasty anger, struck off his head, and continued the retreat. When the English came up, their hound stayed upon the dead body:—

The sleuth stopped at Fawdon, still she stood,
Nor father would frae time she fand the blood.

The story concludes with a fine gothic scene of terror. Wallace took refuge in the solitary tower of Gask. Here he was disturbed at midnight by the blast of a horn; he sent out his attendants by two and two, but no one returned with tidings. At length, when he was left alone, the sound was heard still louder. The champion descended, sword in hand; and at the gate of the tower was encountered by the headless spectre of Fawdon, whom he had slain so rashly. Wallace, in great terror, fled up into the tower, tore open the boards of a window, leapt down fifteen feet in height, and continued his flight up the river. Looking back to Gask, he discovered the tower on fire, and the form of Fawdon upon the battlements, dilated to an immense size, and holding in his hand a blazing rafter. The minstrel concludes,

Trust right wele, that all this be sooth, indeed,
Supposing it be no point of the creed.
The Wallace, Book v.

Mr. Ellis has extracted this tale as a sample of Henry's poetry.—*Specimens of English Poetry*, vol. i, p. 351.

17. Dimly he view'd the Moat-hill's mound.—P. 4.

This is a round artificial mound near Hawick which from its name, (Mot. *Ang. Sax. Concilium., Conventus,*) was probably anciently used as a place for assembling a national council of the adjacent tribes. There are many such mounds in Scotland, and they are sometimes, but rarely, of a square form.

18. Beneath the tower of Hazeldean.—P. 4.

The estate of Hazeldean, corruptly Hassendean, belonged formerly to a family of Scotts, thus commemorated by Satchells:—

Hassendean came without a call,
The ancientest house among them all.

19. On Minto-crags the moon-beams glint.—P. 4.

A romantic assemblage of cliffs, which rise suddenly above the vale of Teviot, in the immediate vicinity of the family-seat from which lord Minto takes his title. A small platform, on a projecting crag, commanding a most beautiful prospect, is termed *Barnhills' Bed.* This Barnhills is said to have been a robber, or outlaw. There are remains

of a strong tower beneath the rocks, where he is supposed to have dwelt, and from which he derived his name. On the summit of the crags are the fragments of another ancient tower, in a picturesque situation. Among the houses cast down by the earl of Hartford, in 1545, occur the towers of Easter Barnhills, and of Minto crag, with Minto town and place. Sir Gilbert Elliot, father to the present lord Minto, was the author of a beautiful pastoral song, of which the following is a more correct copy than is usually published. The poetical mantle of sir Gilbert Elliot has descended to his family.

My sheep I neglected, I broke my sheep-hook,
And all the gay haunts of my youth I forsook:
No more for Amynta fresh garlands I wove;
Ambition, I said, would soon cure me of love.
But what had my youth with ambition to do?
Why left I Amynta? Why broke I my vow?

Through regions remote, in vain do I rove,
And bid the wide world secure me from love.
Ah, fool! to imagine, that aught could subdue
A love so well founded, a passion so true!
Ah, give me my sheep, and my sheep-hook restore,
And I'll wander from love and Amynta no more!

Alas! 'tis too late at thy fate to repine!
Poor shepherd, Amynta no more can be thine!
Thy tears are all fruitless, thy wishes are vain,
The moments neglected return not again.
Ah! what had my youth with ambition to do?
Why left I Amynta? Why broke I my vow?

20. Ancient Riddel's fair domain.—P. 5.

The family of Riddel have been very long in possession of the barony called Riddell, or Rydale, part of which still bears the latter name. Tradition carries their antiquity to a point extremely remote; and is, in some degree, sanctioned by the discovery of two stone coffins, one containing an earthen pot filled with ashes and arms, bearing a legible date, A. D. 727; the other dated 936, and filled with the bones of a man of gigantic size. These coffins were discovered in the foundations of what was, but has long ceased to be, the chapel of Riddel; and as it was argued with plausibility, that they contained the remains of some ancestors of the family, they were deposited in the modern place of sepulture, comparatively so termed, though built in 1110. But the following curious and authentic documents warrant more conclusively the epithet of "ancient Riddell:" 1st, A charter by David I, to Walter Rydale, sheriff of Roxburgh, confirming all the estates of Lilliesclive, &c. of which his father, Gervasius de Rydale, died possessed—2dly, A bull of pope Adrian IV, confirming the will of Walter de Ridale, knight, in favour of his brother Anschittil de Ridale, dated 8th April, 1155. 3dly, A bull of pope Alexander III, confirming the said will of Walter de Ridale, bequeathing to his brother Anschittil the lands of Lilliesclive, Whettunes, &c. and ratifying the bargain betwixt Anschittil and Huetredus, concerning the church of Lilliesclive, in consequence of the mediation of Malcolm II, and confirmed by a charter from that monarch. This bull is dated 17th June, 1160. 4thly, A bull of the same pope, confirming the will of sir Anschittil de Ridale, in favour of his son Walter, conveying the said lands of Lilliesclive and others, dated 10th March, 1120. It is remarkable, that Lilliesclive, otherwise Rydale, or Riddel, and the Whittunes, have descended, through a long train of ancestors, without ever passing into a collateral line, to the person of sir John Buchanan Riddell, Bart, of Riddell, the lineal descendant and representative of sir Anschittil.—These circumstances appeared worthy of notice in a Border work.

21. As glanced his eye o'er Halidon.—P. 5.

Halidon was an ancient seat of the Kerrs of Cessford, now demolished. About a quarter of a mile to the northward lay the field of battle betwixt Buccleuch and Angus, which is called to this day the Skirmish Field—See the fourth note on this Canto.

22. Old Melros' rose, and fair Tweed ran.—P. 5.

The ancient and beautiful monastery of Melrose was founded by king David I. Its ruins afford the finest specimen of Gothic architecture, and Gothic sculpture which Scotland can boast. The stone of which it is built, though it has resisted the weather for so many ages, retains perfect sharpness, so that even the most minute ornaments seem as entire as when newly wrought. In some of the cloisters, as is hinted in the next Canto, there are representations of flowers, vegetables, &c. carved in stone, with accuracy and precision so delicate that we almost distrust our senses, when we consider the difficulty of subjecting so hard a substance to such intricate and exquisite modulation. This superb convent was dedicated to St. Mary, and the monks were of the Cistertian order. At the time of the Reformation, they shared in the general reproach of sensuality and irregularity thrown upon the Roman churchmen. The old words of *Galashiels*, a favourite Scottish air, ran thus;

O the monks of Melrose made gude kale*
On Fridays, when they fasted;
They wanted neither beef nor ale,
As long as their neighbours' lasted.

NOTES TO CANTO II.

1. When silver edges the imagery,
And the scrolls that teach thee to live and die.—P. 5.

The buttresses, ranged along the sides of the ruins of Melrose abbey, are, according to the Gothic style, richly carved and fretted, containing niches for statues of saints, and labelled with scrolls, bearing appropriate texts of Scripture. Most of these statues have been demolished.

2. St David's ruined pile.—P. 5.

David I, of Scotland purchased the reputation of sanctity, by founding, and liberally endowing, not only the monastery of Melrose, but those of Kelso, Jedburgh, and many others, which led to the well known observation of his successor, that he was *a sore saint for the crown.*

3. Lands and livings, many a rood,
Had gifted the shrine for their souls' repose.—P. 5.

The Buccleuch family were great benefactors to the abbey of Melrose. As early as the reign of Robert II, Robert Scott, baron of Murdieston and Rankelburn, (now Buccleuch,) gave to the monks the lands of Hinkery, in Ettrick Forest, *pro salute animæ suæ.—Chartulary of Melrose, 28th* May, 1415.

4. Prayer know I hardly one;
* * * *
Save to patter an Ave Mary,
When I ride on a Border foray.—P. 6.

The Borderers were, as may be supposed, very ignorant about religious matters. Colville, in his *Paranesis* or *admonition*, states that the reformed divines were so far from undertaking distant journeys to convert the heathen, "as I wold wis at God that ye would only go bot to the Hilands and borders of our own realme, to gain our awin countreymen, who, for lack of preching and ministration of the sacraments, must, with tyme, becum either

* *Kale*, Broth.

infidells or atheists." But we learn, from Leslie, that however deficient in real religion, they regularly told their beads, and never with more zeal than when going on a plundering expedition.

5. Beneath their feet were the bones of the dead.—P. 6.

The cloisters were frequently used as places of sepulture. An instance occurs in Dryburgh abbey, where the cloister has an inscription, bearing, *Hic jacet frater Archibaldus.*

6. So had he seen, in fair Castile,
The youth in glittering squadrons start;
Sudden the flying jennet wheel,
And hurl the unexpected dart.—P. 6.

"By my faith," said the duke of Lancaster, (to a Portuguese squire,) "of all the feates of armes that the Castellyans, and they of your countrey doth use, the castynge of their dartes best pleaseth me, and gladly I wolde see it; for, as I hear say, if they strike one aryghte, without he be well armed, the dart will pierce him thrughe."—"By my faith sir," said the squyer, "ye say trouth; for I have seen many a grete stroke given with them, which at one time cost us derely, and was to us great displeasure; for at the said skymirshe, sir John Laurence of Coygne was striken with a dart in such wise, that the head pierced all the plates of his cote of mayle, and a sacke stopped with sylke, and passed thrughe his body, so that he fell down dead."—*Froissart*, vol. ii, ch. 44.—This mode of fighting with darts was imitated in the military game called *Juego de les canas*, which the Spaniards borrowed from their Moorish invaders. A Saracen champion is thus described by Froissart: "Among the Sarazyns, there was a yonge knight called Agadinger Dolyferne; he was always wel mounted on a redy and a lyght horse; it seemed, when the horse ranne, that he did fly in the ayre. The knighte seemed to be a good man of arms by his dedes; he bare always of usage three fethered darts, and rychte well he could handle them; and according to their custome, he was clene armed, with a long white towell about his heed. His apparell was blacke, and his own colour browne, and a good horseman. The erysten men say, they thoughte he dyd such deeds of armes for the love of some young lady of his countrey. And true it was, that he loved entirely the king of Thune's daughter named the Lady Azala; she was inherytour to the realme of Thune, after the decease of the kyng, her father. This Agadinger was sone to the duke of Olyferne. I cannat telle if they were married together after or nat; but it was showed me, that this knyght, for love of the sayd ladye, during the siege, did many feats of armes. The knyghtes of Fraunce would fayne have taken hym; but they colde never attrape nor inclose him, his horse was so swyft, and so redy to his hand that always he escaped."—vol. ii, ch. 71.

7. ——Thy low and lonely urn,
O gallant chief of Otterburne.—P. 6.

The famous and desperate battle of Otterburne was fought 15th August, 1388, betwixt Henry Percy, called Hotspur, and James, earl of Douglas. Both these renowned champions were at the head of a chosen body of troops, and they were rivals in military fame; so that Froissart affirms, "Of all the battaylles and encounterynge that I have made mencion of here before in all this hystory, great or smalle, this battayle that I treat of nowe was one of the sorest and best foughten, without cowardes or faynte hertes; for there was neyther knyght nor squyer but that dyde his devoyre, and fought hande to hande. This batayle was lyke the batayle of Beche rell, the which was valiantly fought and endured." The issue of the conflict is well known: Percy was made prisoner, and the Scots won the day, dearly purchased by the death of their gallant general, the earl of Douglas, who was slain in the action. He was buried at Melrose, beneath the high altar. "His obsequye was done reverently, and on his bodye layde a tombe of stone, and his baner hangyng over him."—*Froissart*, vol. ii, p. 161.

8. ——Dark knight of Liddesdale.—P. 6.

William Douglas, called the knight of Liddesdale, flourished during the reign of David II; and was so distinguished by his valour, that he was called the flower of chivalry. Nevertheless, he tarnished his renown by the cruel murder of sir Alexander Ramsay of Dalhousie, originally his friend and brother in arms. The king had conferred upon Ramsay the sheriffdom of Teviotdale, to which Douglas pretended some claim. In revenge of this preference, the knight of Liddesdale came down upon Ramsay, while he was administering justice at Hawiek, seized and carried him off to his remote and inaccessible castle of Hermitage, where he threw his unfortunate prisoner, horse and man, into a dungeon, and left him to perish of hunger. It is said, the miserable captive prolonged his existence for several days by the corn which fell from a granary above the vault in which he was confined.* So weak was the royal authority, that David, although highly incensed at this atrocious murder, found himself obliged to appoint the knight of Liddesdale successor to his victim, as sheriff of Teviotdale. But he was soon after slain, while hunting in Ettrick forest, by his own godson and chieftain, William earl of Douglas, in revenge, according to some authors, of Ramsay's murder: although a popular tradition, preserved in a ballad quoted by Godscroft, and some parts of which are still preserved, ascribes the resentment of the earl to jealousy. The place where the knight of Liddesdale was killed is called, from his name, William-Cross, upon the ridge of a hill called Willam-Hope, betwixt Tweed and Yarrow. His body, according to Godscroft, was carried to Lindean church the first night after his death, and thence to Melrose, where he was interred with great pomp, and where his tomb is still shown.

9. The moon on the east oriel shone.—P. 6.

It is impossible to conceive a more beautiful specimen of the lightness and elegance of gothic

* There is something affecting in the manner in which the old prior of Lochlevin turns from describing the death of the gallant Ramsay, to the general sorrow which it excited:

To tell you there of the manere,
It is bot sorrow for til here;
He wes the gayttast menyd man
That ony cowth have thowcht of than,
Of his state, or of mare be fare;
All menyt him, bath bettyr and war;
The ryche and pure him menyde bath,
For of his dede was mekil skath.

Some years ago, a person digging for stones, about the old castle of Hermitage, broke into a vault, containing a quantity of chaff, some bones, and pieces of iron; amongst others, the curb of an ancient bridle, which the author has since given to the earl of Dalhousie, under the impression, that it possibly may be a relique of his brave ancestor. The worthy clergyman of the parish has mentioned this discovery in his statistical account of Castletown.

architecture, when in its purity, than the eastern window of Melrose abbey. Sir James Hall of Dunglass, bart. has with great ingenuity and plausibility, traced the gothic order through its various forms, and seemingly eccentric ornaments, to an architectural imitation of wicker work; of which, as we learn from some of the legends, the earliest Christian churches were constructed. In such an edifice, the original of the clustered pillars is traced to a set of round posts, begirt with slender rods of willow, whose loose summits were brought to meet from all quarters, and bound together artificially, so as to produce the frame-work of the roof: and the tracery of our gothic windows is displayed in the meeting and interlacing of rods and hoops, affording an inexhaustible variety of beautiful forms of open work. This ingenious system is alluded to in the romance. Sir James Hall's Essay on Gothic Architecture is published in *The Edinburgh Philosophical Transactions.*

10. They sate them down on a marble stone,
A Scottish monarch slept below.—P. 6.

A large marble stone, in the chancel of Melrose, is pointed out as the monument of Alexander II, one of the greatest of our early kings; others say, it is the resting place of Waldeve, one of the early abbots, who died in the odour of sanctity.

11. The wonderous Michael Scott.—P. 6.

Sir Michael Scott of Balwearie flourished during the 13th century, and was one of the embassadors sent to bring the maid of Norway to Scotland upon the death of Alexander III. By a poetical anachronism, he is here placed in a later æra. He was a man of much learning, chiefly acquired in foreign countries. He wrote a commentary upon Aristotle, printed at Venice in 1496; and several treatises upon natural philosophy, from which he appears to have been addicted to the abstruse studies of judicial astrology, alchymy, physiognomy, and chiromancy. Hence he passed among his cotemporaries for a skilful magician. Dempster informs us, that he remembers to have heard in his youth, that the magic books of Michael Scott were still in existence, but could not be opened without danger, on account of the milignant fiends who were thereby invoked. *Dempsteri Historia Ecclesiastica*, 1627, lib. xii, p. 495. Lesly characterizes Michael Scott, as *singulari philosophiæ, astronomiæ, ac medicinæ laude prestans; dicebatur penitissimos magiæ recessus indagasse.*" Dante also mentions him as a renowned wizard:

> Quell altro che ne' fianchi è così poco
> Michele Scotto fu, che veramente
> Delle magiche frode seppe il gioco.
> *Divina Comedia* Canto, xxmo.

A personage, thus spoken of by biographers and historians, loses little of his mystical fame in vulgar tradition. Accordingly the memory of sir Michael Scott survives in many a legend; and in the south of Scotland, any work of great labour and antiquity, is ascribed, either to the agency of *Auld Michael*, of sir William Wallace, or of the devil. Tradition varies concerning the place of his burial: some contend for Holme Coltrame, in Cumberland; others for Melrose abbey. But all agree, that his books of magic were interred in his grave, or preserved in the convent where he died. Satchells, wishing to give some authority for his account of the origin of the name of Scott, pretends that in 1629, he chanced to be at Burgh under Bowness, in Cumberland, where a person named Lancelot Scott, showed him an extract from Michael Scott's works, containing that story.

> "He said the book which he gave me,
> Was of sir Michael Scott's historie;
> Which history was never yet read through,
> Nor never will, for no man dare it do.
> Young scholars have picked out something
> From the contents, that dare not read within.
> He carried me along the castle then,
> And showed his written book hanging on a iron pin,
> His writing pen did seem to me to be
> Of hardened metal, like steel, or accumie;
> The volume of it did seem so large to me,
> As the book of Martyr's and Turk's historie,
> Then in the church he let me see
> A stone where Mr. Michael Scott did lie;
> I asked at him how that could appear,
> Mr. Michael had been dead above five hundred year?
> He show'd me none durst bury under that stone,
> More than he had been dead a few years agone:
> For Mr. Michael's name doth terrifie each one."
> *History of the right honourable name of Scott.*

12. Salamanca's cave.—P. 6.

Spain, from the relics, doubtless, of Arabian learning and superstition, was accounted a favourite residence of magicians. Pope Sylvester, who actually imported from Spain the use of the Arabian numerals, was supposed to have learned there the magic, for which he was stigmatized by the ignorance of his age.—*William of Malmsbury*, lib. ii, cap. 10. There were public schools, where magic, or rather the sciences supposed to involve its mysteries, were regularly taught, at Toledo, Seville, and Salamanca. In the latter city, they were held in a deep cavern, the mouth of which was walled up by queen Isabella, wife of king Ferdinand.—*D'Autun on Learned Incredulity*, p. 45. These Spanish schools of magic are celebrated also by the Italian poets of romance:

> Questa città di Tolleto solea
> Tenere studio di Negromanzia:
> Quivi di magica arte si leggea
> Pubblicamente, e di Piromanzia;
> E molti Geomanti sempre avea,
> E sperimenti assai d' Idromanzia
> E d' altre false opinion di sciocchi
> Come e fatture, o spesso batter gli occhi.
> *Il Morgante Maggiore*, Canto xxv, st. 259.

The celebrated magician Maugis, cousin to Rinaldo of Montalban, called by Ariosto, Malagigi, studied the black art at Toledo, as we learn from *L'Histoire de Maugis D'Aygremont.* He even held a professor's chair in the necromantic university; for I so interpret the passage, "*qu'en tous les sept arts d'enchantement, des charmes et conjurations, il n'y avoit meilleur maistre que lui; et en tel renom qu'on le laissoit en chaise, et l'appelloit on maistre Maugis.*" This Salamancan Domdaniel is said to have been founded by Hercules. If the classic reader inquires where Hercules himself learned magic, he may consult "*Les faicts et prouesses du noble et vaillant Hercules,*" where he will learn, that the fable of his aiding Atlas to support the heavens, arose from the said Atlas having taught Hercules, *the noble knight errant*, the seven liberal sciences, and in particular, that of judicial astrology. Such, according to the idea of the middle ages, were the studies, *maximus quæ docuit Atlas.*"—In a romantic history of Roderic, the last Gothic king of Spain, he is said to have entered one of those enchanted caverns. It was situated beneath an ancient tower near Toledo: and, when the iron gates, which secured the entrance, were unfolded, there rushed forth so dreadful a whirlwind, that hitherto no one had dared to penetrate into its recesses. But Roderic, threatened with an invasion of the Moors, resolved to enter the cavern, where

he expected to find some prophetic intimation of the event of the war. Accordingly, his train being furnished with torches, so artificially composed, that the tempest could not extinguish them, the king, with great difficulty, penetrated into a square hall, inscribed all over with Arabian characters. In the midst stood a collossal statue of brass, representing a Saracen wielding a Moorish mace, with which it discharged furious blows on all sides, and seemed thus to excite the tempest which raged around. Being conjured by Roderick, it ceased from striking until he read, inscribed on the right hand, "*Wretched monarch, for thy evil hast thou come hither;*" on the left hand, "*Thou shalt be dispossessed by a strange people;*" on one shoulder, "*I invoke the sons of Hagar;*" on the other, "*I do mine office.*" When the king had decyphered these ominous inscriptions, the statue returned to its exercise, the tempest commenced anew, and Roderic retired, to mourn over the predicted evils which approached his throne. He caused the gates of the cavern to be locked and barricaded; but, in the course of the night, the tower fell with a tremendous noise, and under its ruins concealed for ever the entrance to the mystic cavern. The conquest of Spain by the Saracens, and the death of the unfortunate Don Roderic, fulfilled the prophecy of the brazen statue. *Historia verdadera del Rey Don Rodrigo por el sabio Alcayde Abulcacim, traduzeda de la lengua Arabiga por Miquel de Luna*, 1654, cap. vi.

13. The bells would ring in Notre Dame.—P. 6.

"*Tantamne rem tam negligenter?*" says Tyrwhitt, of his predecessor Speight; who, in his commentary on Chaucer, had omitted, as trivial and fabulous, the story of Wade and his boat Guingelot, to the great prejudice of posterity, the memory of the hero and the boat being now entirely lost. That future antiquaries may lay no such omission to my charge, I have noted one or two of the most current traditions concerning Michael Scott. He was chosen, it is said, to go upon an embassy, to obtain from the king of France satisfaction for certain piracies committed by his subjects upon those of Scotland. Instead of preparing a new equipage and splendid retinue, the ambassador retreated to his study, opened his book, and evoked a fiend in the shape of a huge black horse, mounted upon his back, and forced him to fly through the air towards France. As they crossed the sea, the devil insidiously asked his rider, what it was that the old women of Scotland muttered at bed time? A less experienced wizard might have answered, that it was the Pater Noster, which would have licensed the devil to precipitate him from his back. But Michael sternly replied, "What is that to thee? Mount, Diabolus, and fly!" When he arrived at Paris, he tied his horse to the gate of the palace, entered and boldly delivered his message. An ambassador, with so little of the pomp and circumstance of diplomacy, was not received with much respect, and the king was about to return a contemptuous refusal to his demand, when Michael besought him to suspend his resolution till he had seen his horse stamp three times. The first stamp shook every steeple in Paris, and caused all the bells to ring; the second threw down three of the towers of the palace; and the infernal steed had lifted his hoof to give the third stamp, when the king rather chose to dismiss Michael, with the most ample concessions, than to stand to the probable consequences. Another time, it is said, that, when residing at the tower of Oakwood, upon the Ettrick, about three miles above Selkirk, he heard of the fame of a sorceress, called the witch of Falsehope, who lived on the opposite side of the river. Michael went one morning to put her skill to the test, but was disappointed by her denying positively any knowledge of the necromantic art.

In his discourse with her, he laid his wand inadvertently on the table, which the hag observing, suddenly snatched it up, and struck him with it. Feeling the force of the charm, he rushed out of the house; but, as it had conferred on him the external appearance of a hare, his servant, who waited without, haloo'd upon the discomfited wizard his own greyhounds, and pursued him so close, that in order to obtain a moment's breathing to reverse the charm, Michael, after a very fatiguing course, was fain to take refuge in his own *jaw-hole* (*anglice*, common sewer). In order to revenge himself of the witch of Falsehope, Michael, one morning in the ensuing harvest, went to the hill above the house with his dogs, and sent down his servant to ask a bit of bread from the good-wife for his greyhounds, with instructions what to do if he met with a denial. Accordingly, when the witch had refused the boon with contumely, the servant, as his master had directed, laid above the door a paper, which he had given him, containing amongst many cabalistical words, the well-known rhyme,—

Maister Michael Scot's man
Sought meat, and gat nane.

Immediately the good old woman, instead of pursuing her domestic occupation, which was baking bread for the reapers, began to dance round the fire, repeating the rhyme, and continued this exercise till her husband sent the reapers to the house, one after another, to see what had delayed their provision; but the charm caught each as they entered, and, losing, all idea of returning, they joined in the dance and chorus. At length the old man himself went to the house; but as his wife's frolic with Mr. Michael, whom he had seen on the hill, made him a little cautious, he contented himself with looking in at the window, and saw the reapers at their involuntary exercise, dragging his wife, now completely exhausted, sometimes round and sometimes through the fire, which was, as usual, in the midst of the house. Instead of entering, he saddled a horse, rode up the hill, to humble himself before Michael, and beg a cessation of the spell; which the good natured warlock immediately granted, directing him to enter the house backwards, and, with his left hand, take the spell from above the door; which accordingly ended the supernatural dance.—This tale was told less particularly in former editions, and I have been censured for inaccuracy in doing so.—A similar charm occurs in *Huon du Bourdeaux*, and in the ingenious Oriental tale, called the *Caliph Vathek*.

Notwithstanding his victory over the witch of Falsehope, Michael Scott, like his predecessor Merlin, fell at last a victim to female art. His wife, or concubine, elicited from him the secret, that his art could ward off any danger except the poisonous qualities of broth, made of the flesh of a *breme* sow. Such a mess she accordingly administered to the wizard, who died in consequence of eating it; surviving, however, long enough to put to death his treacherous confidante.

14. The words, that cleft Eildon Hills in three,
And bridled the Tweed with a curb of stone.—P. 6.

Michael Scott was, once upon a time, much em-

barrassed by a spirit, for whom he was under the necessity of finding constant employment. He commanded him to build a *cauld*, or dam-head, across the Tweed at Kelso; it was accomplished in one night, and still does honour to the infernal architect. Michael next ordered, that Eildon hills, which was then a uniform cone, should be divided into three. Another night was sufficient to part its summit into the three picturesque peaks which it now bears. At length the enchanter conquered this indefatigable demon, by employing him in the hopeless and endless task of making ropes out of sea-sand.

15. That lamp shall burn unquenchably.—P. 7.

Baptista Porta, and other authors who treat of natural magic, talk much of eternal lamps, pretended to have been found burning in ancient sepulchres. Fortunius Licetus investigates the subject in a treatise, *De Lucernis antiquorum reconditis*, published at Venice, 1621. One of these perpetual lamps is said to have been discovered in the tomb of Tulliola, the daughter of Cicero. The wick was supposed to be composed of asbestos. Kircher enumerates three different receipts for constructing such lamps; and wisely concludes, that the thing is nevertheless impossible.—*Mundus Subterraneus*, p. 72. Delrio imputes the fabrication of such lights to magical skill.—*Disquisitiones Magicæ*, p. 58. In a very rare romance, which "treateth of the lyfe of Virgilius, and of his death, and many marvayles that he dyd in his lyfe-time, by wyche-crafte and nygramaneye, throughe the help of the devyls of hell," mention is made of a very extraordinary process, in which one of these mystical lamps was employed. It seems that Virgil, as he advanced in years, became desirous of renovating his youth by his magical art. For this purpose he constructed a solitary tower, having only one narrow portal, in which he placed twenty-four copper figures, armed with iron flails, twelve on each side of the porch. These enchanted statues struck with their flails incessantly, and rendered all entrance impossible, unless when Virgil touched the spring which stopped their motion. To this tower he repaired privately, attended by one trusty servant, to whom he communicated the secret of the entrance, and hither they conveyed all the magician's treasure. "Then sayde Virgilius, my dere beloved friende, and he that I above alle men truste and knowe mooste of my secret;" and then he led the man into a cellar, where he made a *fayer lamp at all seasons burnynge*. And then sayd Virgilius to the man, "See you the barrel that standeth here?" and he sayd, Yea: "Therein must you put me: fyrst ye must slee me and hew me smalle to pieces, and cut my hed in iiii pieces, and salte the heed under in the bottom, and then the pieces there after, and my herte in the myddel, and then set the barrel under the lampe, that nyghte and day the fat therein may droppe and leak; and ye shall ix dayes long, ones in the day, fyll the lampe, and fayle nat. And when this is all done, then shall I be renued, and made younge agen." At this extraordinary proposal, the confidant was sore abashed, and made some scruple of obeying his master's commands. At length, however, he complied, and Virgil was slain, pickled, and barrelled up, in all respects according to his own direction. The servant then left the tower, taking care to put the copper thrashers in motion at his departure. He continued daily to visit the tower, with the same precaution. Meanwhile, the emperor, with whom Virgil was a great favourite, missed him from the court, and demanded of his servant where he was. The domestic pretended ignorance, till the emperor threatened him with death, when at length he conveyed him to the enchanted tower. The same threat extorted a discovery of the mode of stopping the statues from wielding their flails. "And then the emperor entered into the castle with all his folke, and sought all aboute in every corner after Virgilius; and at the last they soughte so longe, that they came into the seller, where they sawe the lampe hang over the barrel where Virgilius lay in deed. Then asked the emperor the man, who had made hym so herdy to put his myaster Virgilius so to dethe; and the man answered no word to the emperour. And then the emperour, with great anger, drewe out his sworde, and slewe he there Virgilius' man. And when all this was done, then sawe the emperour, and all his folke, a naked childe iii tymes rennynge about the barrell, saying these wordes, 'Cursed be the tyme that ye ever came here!' And with these wordes vanyshed the chylde awaye, and was never sene ageyne; and thus abyd Virgilius in the barrell deed." *Virgilius*, bl. let. printed at Antwerpe by John Doesborcke. This curious volume is in the valuable library of Mr. Douce; and is supposed to be a translation from the French, printed in Flanders for the English market. See *Goujet Biblioth. Franc.* ix, 225. *Catalogue de la Bibliotheque Nationale*, tom. ii, p. 5. *De Bure*, No. 3857.

16. He thought, as he took it, the dead man frowu'd—P. 7.

William of Deloraine might be strengthened in this belief by the well-known story of the Cid Ruy Diaz. When the body of that famous Christian champion was sitting in state by the high altar of the cathedral church of Toledo, where it remained for ten years, a certain malicious Jew attempted to pull him by the beard; but he had no sooner touched the formidable whiskers, than the corpse started up, and half unsheathed his sword. The Israelite fled; and so permanent was the effect of his terror, that he became a Christian. *Heywood's Hierarchie, p.* 480, quoted from *Sebastian Cobarruvias Orozee.*

17. The baron's dwarf his courser held.—P. 8.

The idea of lord Cranstoun's goblin page, is taken from a being called Gilpin Horner, who appeared, and made some stay, at a farm-house among the Border-mountains. A gentleman of that country has noted down the following particulars concerning his appearance.

"The only certain, at least most probable account, that ever I heard of Gilpin Horner, was from an old man, of the name of Anderson, who was born, and lived all his life, at Todshawhill, in Eskdale muir, the place where Gilpin appeared and staid for some time. He said there were two men, late in the evening, when it was growing dark, employed in fastening the horses upon the uttermost part of their ground, (that is, tying their forefeet together, to hinder them from travelling far in the night,) when they heard a voice, at some distance, crying, '*tint! tint! tint!*'* One of the men, named Moffat, called out, 'What de'il has tint you? Come here.' Immediately a creature, of something like a human form, appeared. It was surprisingly little, disorted in features, and

* *Tint* signifies *lost*.

misshapen in limbs. As soon as the two men could see it plainly, they ran home in a fright, imagining they had met with some goblin. By the way, Moffat fell, and it ran over him, and was home at the house as soon as either of them, and staid there a long time; but I cannot say how long. It was real flesh and blood, and ate and drank, was fond of cream, and, when it could get at it, would destroy a great deal. It seemed a mischievous creature; and any of the children whom it could master, it would beat and scratch without mercy. It was once abusing a child belonging to the same Moffat, who had been so frightened by its first appearance; and he, in a passion, struck it so violent a blow upon the side of the head, that it tumbled upon the ground: but it was not stunned; for it set up its head directly, and exclaimed, 'Ah, hah, Will o' Moffat, you strike sair!' (viz. *sore*.) After it had staid there long, one evening, when the women were milking the cows in the loan, it was playing among the children near by them, when suddenly they heard a loud shrill voice cry, three times, '*Gilpin Horner!*' It started, and said, '*That is me, I must away!*' and instantly disappeared, and was never heard of more. Old Anderson did not remember it, but said he had often heard his father, and other old men in the place, who were there at the time, speak about it; and in my younger years I have often heard it mentioned, and never met with any who had the remotest doubt as to the truth of the story; although, I must own, I cannot help thinking there must be some misrepresentation in it."—To this account, I have to add the following particulars from the most respectable authority. Besides constantly repeating the word *tint! tint!* Gilpin Horner was often heard to call upon Peter Bertram, or Be-teram, as he pronounced the word; and when the shrill voice called Gilpin Horner, he immediately acknowledged it was the summons of the said Peter Bertram; who seems, therefore to have been the devil, who had tint, or lost the little imp. As much has been objected to Gilpin Horner on account of his being supposed rather a device of the author than a popular superstition, I can only say, that no legend which I ever heard seemed to be more universally credited, and that many persons of very good rank and considerable information are well known to repose absolute faith in the tradition.

18. But the Ladye of Branksome gather'd a band,
Of the best that would ride at her command.—P. 8.

"Upon 25th June, 1557, dame Janet Beatoune, lady Buccleuch, and a great number of the name of Scott, delatit (accused) for coming to the kirk of St. Mary of the Lowes, to the number of two hundred persons bodin in feire of weire, (arrayed in armour,) and breaking open the doors of the said kirk, in order to apprehend the laird of Cranstoune for his destruction." On the 20th July, a warrant from the queen is presented, discharging the justice to proceed against the lady Buccleuch while new calling. *Abridgement of Books of Adjournal in Advocates' Library.*—The following proceedings upon this case appear on the record of the Court of Justiciary. On the 25th of June, 1557, Robert Scott, of Bowhill parish, priest of the kirk of St. Mary's, accused of the convocation of the queen's lieges, to the number of two hundred persons, in warlike array, with jacks, helmets and other weapons, and marching to the chapel of St. Mary of the Lowes, for the slaughter of sir Peter Cranstoun, out of ancient feud and malice prepense, and of breaking the doors of the said kirk, is repledged by the archbishop of Glasgow. The bail given by Robert Scott of Allenhaugh, Adam Scott of Burnefute, Robert Scott in Howfurde, Walter Scott in Todshawhaugh, Walter Scott younger of Synton, Thomas Scott of Hayning, Robert Scott, William Scott and James Scott, brothers of the said Walter Scott, Walter Scott in the Woll, and Walter Scott, son of William Scott of Harden, and James Wemyss in Eckford, all accused of the same crime, is declared to be forfeited. On the same day, Walter Scott of Synton, and Walter Chisholme of Chisholme, and William Scott of Harden, became bound, jointly and severally, that sir Peter Cranstoun, and his kindred and servants, should receive no injury from them in future. At the same time, Patrick Murray of Fallohill, Alexander Stuart, uncle to the laird of Trakwhare, John Murray of Newhall, John Fairlye, residing in Selkirk, George Tait, younger of Pirn, John Pennycuke, of Pennycuke, James Ramsay of Cokpen, the laird of Fassyde, and the laird of Henderstoune, were all severally fined for not attending as jurors; being probably either in alliance with the accused parties, or dreading their vengeance. Upon the 20th of July following, Scott of Synton, Chisholme of Chisholme, Scott of Harden, Scott of Howpaslie, Scott of Burnfute, with many others, are ordered to appear at next calling, under the pains of treason. But no farther procedure seems to have taken place. It is said, that, upon this rising, the kirk of St. Mary's was burned by the Scotts.

NOTES TO CANTO III.

1. When, dancing in the sunny beam,
He mark'd the crane on the baron's crest.—P. 9.

The crest of the Cranstouns, in allusion to their name, is a crane dormant, holding a stone in his foot, with an emphatic Border motto, *Thou shalt want ere I want.*

2. Much he marvell'd a knight of pride,
Like a book-bosom'd priest should ride.—P. 9.

"At Unthank, two miles N. E. from the church, (of Ewes) there are the ruins of a chapel for divine service, in time of popery. There is a tradition, that friars were wont to come from Melrose, or Jedburgh, to baptize and marry in this parish; and from being in use to carry the mass-book in their bosoms, they were called, by the inhabitants, *Book-a-bosomes*. There is a man yet alive, who knew old men who had been baptized by these book-a-bosomes, and who says one of them, called Hair, used this parish for a very long time."—*Account of Parish of Ewes, apud Macfarlane's MSS.*

3. It had much of glamour might.—P. 9.

Glamour, in the legends of Scottish superstition, means the magic power of imposing on the eyesight of the spectators, so that the appearance of an object shall be totally different from the reality. The transformation of Michael Scott by the witch of Falsehope, already mentioned, was a genuine operation of glamour. To a similar charm the ballad of Johnny Fa' imputes the fascination of the lovely countess, who eloped with that gipsy leader:

Sae soon as they saw her weel far'd face,
They cast the *glamour* o'er her.

It was formerly used even in war. In 1381, when the duke of Anjou lay before a strong castle, upon the coast of Naples, a necromancer offered to "make the ayre so thycke, that they within shal

thynke that there is a great bridge on the see, (by which the castle was surrounded,) for ten men to go a front; and whan they within the castle se this bridge, they will be so afrayde, that they shall yelde them to your mercy. The duke demanded—Fayre Master, on this bridge that ye speke of, may our people assuredly go thereon to the castell to assayle it? Syr, quod the enchantour, I dare not assure you that; for if any that passeth on the bridge make the signe of the crosse on hym, all shall go to noughte, and they that be on the bridge shall fall into the see. Then the duke began to laugh; and a certain of young knightes, that were there present, said, syr, for Godsake, let the master essaye his cunning; we sal leve making of any signe of the crosse on us for that time." The earl of Savoy, shortly after, entered the tent, and recognised in the enchanter the same person who had put the castle into the power of sir Charles de la Payx, who then held it, by persuading the garrison of the queen of Naples, through magical deception, that the sea was coming over the walls. The sage avowed the feat, and added, that he was the man in the world most dreaded by sir Charles de la Payx. "By my fayth, quod the erl of Savoy, ye say well, and I will that sir Charles de la Payx shall know that he hath gret wronge to fear you. But I shall assure him of you: for ye shall never do enchantment to deceyve him, nor yet none other. I wolde nat that in tyme to come we shulde be reproached that in so high an enterprise as we be in, wherein there be so many noble knyghtes and squyers assembled, that we shulde do any thyng be enchauntment, nor that we shulde wyn our enemys by suche crafte. Then he called to hym a servaunt, and sayd, go and get a hangman, and let hym stryke of this mayster's heed without delay: and as sone as the erle had commanded it, incontynent it was done, for his heed was stryken of before the erle's tent." *Froissart*, vol. i, ch. 391, 392.

The art of glamour, or other fascination, was anciently a principal part of the skill of the *jongleur*, or juggler, whose tricks formed much of the amusement of a gothic castle. Some instances of this art may be found in the *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*, vol. iii, p. 119. In a strange allegorical poem, called the Houlat, written by a dependant of the house of Douglas, about 1452-3, the jay, in an assembly of birds, plays the part of the juggler. His feats of glamour are thus described:

He gart them see, as it semyt, in samyn houre,
Hunting at herdis in holtis so hair;
Some sailand on the see schippis of toure,
Bernis battaland on burd brim as a bare;
He coude carye the coup of the kingis des,
Syne leve in the stede,
Bot a black bunwede;
He coulde of a henis hede,
Make a man mes.
He gart the emprour trow, and trewyle behald,
That the *cornecraik*, the pundare at hand,
Had poyndit all his pris hors in a poynd fald,
Because thai ete of the corn in the kirkland.
He could wirk windaris, quhat way that he wald;
Mak a gray gus a gold garland,
A lang spere of a bittile for a berne bald,
Nobilis of nutschelles, and silver of sand.
Thus joukit with juxters the jaglane ja,
Fair ladyes in ringis,
Knychtis in caralyngis,
Bayth dansis and singis,
It semyt as sa.

4. Now, if you ask who gave the stroke,
I cannot tell, so mot I thrive;
It was not given by man alive.—P. 9.

Dr. Henry More, in a letter prefixed to Glanville's *Saducismus Triumphatus*, mentions a similar phenomenon.

"I remember an old gentleman of the country, of my acquaintance, an excellent justice of peace, and a piece of a mathematician; but what kind of a philosopher he was you may understand from a rhyme of his own making, which he commended to me at my taking horse in his yard, which rhyme is this:

Ens is nothing till sense find out;
Sense ends in nothing, so naught goes about.

Which rhyme of his was so rapturous to himself, that on the reciting of the second verse, the old man turned himself about upon his toe as nimbly as one may observe a dry leaf whisked round in the corner of an orchard-walk by some little whirlwind. With this philosopher I have had many discourses concerning the immortality of the soul and its distinction; when I have run him quite down by reason, he would but laugh at me and say, this is logic, H. (calling me by my christian name;) to which I replied, this is reason, father L. (for so I used and some others to call him;) but it seems you are for the new lights, and immediate inspiration, which I confess he was as little for as for the other; but I said so only in way of drollery to him in those times: but truth is, nothing but palpable experience would move him; and being a bold man, and fearing nothing, he told me he had used all the magical ceremonies of conjuration he could, to raise the devil or a spirit, and had a most earnest desire to meet with one, but could not do it. But this he told me, when he did not so much as think of it, while his servant was pulling off his boots in the hall, some invisible hand gave him such a clap upon the back, that it made all ring again; so thought he now, I am invited to the converse of my spirit, and therefore, so soon as his boots were off, and his shoes on, out he goes into the yard and next field, to find out the spirit that had given him this familiar clap on the back, but found none neither in the yard nor field next to it.

"But though he did feel this stroke, albeit he thought it afterwards (finding nothing came of it) a mere delusion; yet, not long before his death, it had more force with him than all the philosophical arguments I could use with him, though I could wind him and non-plus him as I pleased; but yet all my arguments, how solid soever, made no impression upon him; wherefore, after several reasonings of this nature, whereby I could prove to him the soul's distinction from the body, and its immortality, when nothing of such subtle considerations did any more execution on his mind than some lightning is said to do, though it melts the sword, on the fuzzy consistency of the scabbard.—Well, said I, father L., though none of these things move you, I have something still behind, and what yourself has acknowledged to me to be true, that may do the business:—Do you remember the clap on your back when your servant was pulling off your boots in the hall? Assure yourself, said I, father L., that goblin will be the first that will bid you welcome into the other world. Upon this his countenance changed most sensibly, and he was more confounded with this rubbing up his memory, than with all the rational or philosophical ceremonies that I could produce."

5. The running stream dissolved the spell.—P. 10.

It is a firm article of popular faith, that no enchantment can subsist in a living stream. Nay, if you can interpose a brook betwixt youand witches,

spectres, or even fiends, you are in perfect safety. Burns's inimitable *Tam o' Shanter* turns entirely upon such a circumstance. The belief seems to be of antiquity. Brompton informs us, that certain Irish wizards could, by spells, convert earthen clods, or stones, into fat pigs, which they sold in the market; but which always re-assumed their proper form, when driven by the deceived purchaser across a running stream. But Brompton is severe on the Irish, for a very good reason. "Gens ista spurcissima non solvunt decimas."—*Chronicon Johannis Brompton apud decem Scriptores*, p. 1076.

6. His buckler scarce in breadth a span,
No longer fence had he;
He never counted him a man,
Would strike below the knee.—P. 10.

Imitated from Drayton's account of Robin Hood and his followers.

A hundred valiant men had this brave Robin Hood,
Still ready at his call that bowmen were right good;
All clad in Lincoln green, with caps of red and blue,
His fellow's winded horn not one of them but knew.
When setting to their lips their bugle loud and shrill,
The warbling echoes waked from every dale and hill;
Their bauldries set with studs athwart their shoulders cast,
To which under their arms their sheafs were buckled fast,
A short sword at their belt, a buckler scarce a span,
Who struck below the knee not counted then a man.
All made of Spanish yew, their bows were wonderous strong,
They not an arrow drew, but was a clothyard long,
Of archery they had the very perfect craft,
With broad arrow, or hut, or prick, or roving shaft.

To wound an antagonist in the thigh, or leg, was reckoned contrary to the law of arms. In a tilt betwixt Gawain Michael, an English squire, and Joachim Cathroe, a Frenchman, "they met at the speare poyntes rudely; the French squyer justed right pleasantly; the Englyshman ran too lowe, for he strak the Frenchman depe in the thygh. Wherewith the earl of Buckingham was right sore displeased, and so were all the other lordes, and sayde how it was shamefully done." *Froissart*, vol. i, ch. 366.—Upon a similar occasion "the two knights came a fote eche against the other rudely, with their speares low couched, to strike each other within the foure quarters. Johan of Castell-Morante strake the Englysh squyer, on the brest in such wyse, that sir Wyllyam Fermetone stombled and bowed, for his fote a lyttle fayled him. He helde his spear lowe with both his handes, and coulde nat amende it, and strake sir Johan of the Castell-Morante in the thighe, so that the speare went clene through that the heed was sene a handful on the other syde. And syre Johan with the stroke reled, but he fell nat. Then the Englyshe knights and squyers were righte sore displeased, and sayde how it was a foul stroke. Syr Wyllyam Fermetone excused himself, and sayde how he was sorie of that adventure, and howe that yf he had knowen that it shulde have been so, he wolde never have begon it: sayenge how he coude nat amende it, by cause of glaunsing of his fote by constraynt of the great stroke that syr Johan of the Castell-Morante had given him." *Ibid.* ch. 373.

7. And with a charm she stanch'd the blood.—P. 11.

See several charms for this purpose in Reginald Scott's *Discovery of Witchcraft*, p. 273.

Tom Potts was but a serving man,
But yet he was a doctor good;
He bound his handkerchief on the wound,
And with some kind of words he stanched the blood.
Pieces of ancient popular Poetry, Lond. 1791, p. 131.

8. But she has ta'en the broken lance,
And washed it from the clotted gore,
And salved the splinter o'er and o'er.—P. 11.

Sir Kenelm Digby, in a discourse upon the cure by sympathy, pronounced at Montpelier, before an assembly of nobles and learned men, translated into English, by R. White, gentleman, and published in 1658, gives us the following curious surgical case:

"Mr. James Howel (well known in France for his public works, and particularly for his *Dendrologie*, translated into French by Mons. Baudouin) coming by chance, as two of his best friends were fighting in duel, he did his endeavour to part them; and, putting himselfe between them, siezed with his left hand upon the hilt of the sword of one of the combatants, while, with his right hand, he laid hold of the blade of the other. They, being transported with fury one against the other, struggled to rid themselves of the hindrance their friend made that they should not kill one another; and one of them roughly drawing the blade of his sword cuts to the very bone the nerves and muscles of Mr. Howel's hand; and then the other disengaged his hilt, and gave a cross blow on his adversarie's head, which glanced towards his friend, who heaving up his sore hand to save the blow, he was wounded on the back of his hand, as he had been before within. It seems some strange constellation reigned then against him, that he should lose so much blood by parting two sveh dear friends, who, had they been themselves, would have hazarded both their lives to have preserved his; but this involuntary effusion of bloud by them, prevented that which they sholde have drawn one from the other. For they, seeing Mr. Howel's face besmeared with bloud, by heaving up his wounded hand, they both ran to embrace him; and having searched his hurts, they bound up his hand with one of his garters, to close the veins which were cut and bled abundantly. They brought him home, and sent for a surgeon. But this being heard at court, the king sent one of his own surgeons; for his majesty much affected the said Mr. Howel.

"It was my chance to be lodged hard by him; and four or five days after, as I was making myself ready, he came to my house, and prayed me to view his wounds; 'for I understand,' said he, 'that you have extraordinary remedies on such occasions, and my surgeons apprehend some fear that it may grow to a gangrene, and so the hand must be cut off.' In effect his countenance discovered that he was in much pain, which he said was insupportable, in regard of the extreme inflammation. I told him I would willingly serve him. But if haply he knew the manner how I would cure him, without touching or seeing him, it may be he would not expose himself to my manner of curing, because he would think it, peradventure, either ineffectual or superstitious. He replied, 'The wonderful things which many have related unto me of your way of medicinement, makes me nothing doubt at all of its efficacy, and all that I have to say unto you is comprehended in the Spanish proberb, *Hagase el milagro y hagalo Mahoma*—Let the miracle be done, though Mahomet do it.'

"I asked him then for any thing that had the bloud upon it; so he presently sent for his garter, wherewith his hand was first bound: and as I called for a basin of water, as if I would wash my hands, I took a handful of powder of vitriol, which I had in my study, and presently dissolved it. As soon as the bloudy garter was brought me, I put it within the basin, observing in the interim, what Mr. Howel did, who stood talking with a gentle-

man in a corner of my chamber, not regarding at all what I was doing; but he started suddenly, as if he had found some strange alteration in himself. I asked him what he ailed? 'I know not what ailes me; but I finde that I feel no more pain. Methinks that a pleasing kinde of freshenes, as it were a wet cold napkin, did spread over my hand, which hath taken away the inflammation that tormented me before.' I replyed, 'Since then that you feel already so good effect of my medicament, I advise you to cast away all your playsters; only keep the wound clean, and in a moderate temper betwixt heat and cold.' This was presently reported to the duke of Buckingham, and a little after to the king, who were both very curious to know the circumstance of the business, which was, that after dinner I took the garter out of the water, and put it to dry before a great fire. It was scarce dry, but Mr. Howel's servant came running, that his master felt as much burning as ever he had done, if not more; for the heat was such as if his hand was twixt coles of fire. I answered, although that had happened at present, yet he should find ease in a short time; for I knew the reason of this new accident, and would provide accordingly; for his master should be free from that inflammation, it may be before he could possibly return to him; but in case he found no ease, I wished him to come presently back again; if not he might forbear coming. Thereupon he went; and at the instant I did put again the garter into the water, whereupon he found his master without any pain at all. To be brief, there was no sense of pain afterward: but within five or six dayes the wounds were cicatrized, and entirely healed." p. 6.

The king (James VI) obtained from sir Kenelm the discovery of his secret, which he pretended had been taught him by a carmelite friar, who had learned it in Armenia, or Persia. Let not the age of animal magnetism and metallic tractors smile at the sympathetic powder of sir Kenelm Digby. Reginald Scott mentions the same mode of cure in these terms: "and that which is more strange —They can remedie anie stranger with that verie sword wherewith they are wounded. Yea, and that which is beyond all admiration, if they stroke the sword upward with their fingers, the partie shall feele no pain; whereas, if they draw their fingers downwards, thereupon the partie wounded shall feele intolerable pain." I presume that the success abscribed to the sympathetic mode of treatment might arise from the pains bestowed in washing the wound, and excluding the air, thus bringing on a cure by the first intention. It is introduced by Dryden in the *Enchanted Island*, a (very unnecessary) alteration of the *Tempest:*

Ariel. Anoint the sword which pierced him with this
Weapon-salve, and wrap it close from air,
Till I have time to visit him again.—*Act v, sc.* 2.

Again, in scene 4th, Miranda enters with Hippolito's sword wrapt up:

Hip. O my wound pains me. [*She unwraps the sword.*
Mir. I am come to ease you.
Hip. Alas, I feel the cold air come to me:
My wound shoots worse than ever.
Mir. Does it still grieve you?
[*She wipes and anoints the sword.*
Hip. Now, methinks, there's something laid just upon it.
Mir. Do you find no ease?
Hip. Yes, yes; upon the sudden all this pain
Is leaving me. Sweet heaven, how I am eased!

9. On Penchryst glows a bale of fire,
And three are kindling on Priesthaughswire.—P. 11.

The Border beacons, from their number and position, formed a sort of telegraphic communication with Edinburgh.—The act of parliament, 1455, c. 48, directs, that one bale or faggot shall be warning of the approach of the English in any manner; two bales, that they are *coming indeed:* four bales blazing beside each other, that the enemy are in great force. "The same taikenings to be watched and made at Eggerhope (Eggerstane) Castell, fra they se the fire of Hume, that they fire right swa. And in like manner on Sowtra Edge, sall se the fire of Eggerhope Castell, and mak taikening in like manner. And then may all Louthiane be warned, and in special the Castell of Edinburgh; and their four fires to be made in like manner that they in Fife, and fra Striveling east, and the east part of Louthaine, and to Dunbar, all may se them, and come to the defence of the realm." These beacons (at least in latter times) were "a long and strong tree set up, with a long iron pole across the head of it, and an iron brander fixed on a stalk in the middle of it, for holding a tar barrel."—*Stevenson's History*, vol. ii, p. 701.

10. Our kin, and clan, and friends, to raise.—P. 11.

The speed with which the Borderers collected great bodies of horse, may be judged of from the following extract, when the subject of the rising was much less important than that supposed in the romance. It is taken from Carey's *Memoirs:* "Upon the death of the old lord Scroop, the queen gave the west wardenry to his son, that had married my sister. He, having received that office, came to me with great earnestness, and desired me to be his deputy, offering me that I should live with him in his house; that he would allow me half a dozen men, and as many horses, to be kept at his charge; and his fee being 1000 merks yearly, he would part it with me, and I should have the half. This his noble offer I accepted of, and went with him to Carlisle, where I was no sooner come, but I entered into my office. We had a stirring time of it; and few days past over my head but I was on horseback, either to prevent mischief, or take malefactors, and to bring the Border in better quiet than it had been in times past. One memorable thing of God's mercy showed unto me, was such as I had good cause still to remember it.

"I had private intelligence given me, that there were two Scottish men, who had killed a churchman in Scotland, and were by one of the Græmes relieved. This Græme dwelt within five miles of Carlisle. He had a pretty house, and close by it a strong tower, for his own defence in time of need. —About two o'clock in the morning, I took horse in Carlisle, and not above twenty-five in my company, thinking to surprise the house on a sudden. Before I could surround the house, the two Scots were gotten in the strong tower, and I could see a boy riding from the house as fast as his horse could carry him; I little suspecting what it meant. But Thomas Carleton came to me presently, and told me, that if I did not presently prevent it, both myself and all my company would be either slain or taken prisoners. It was strange to me to hear this language. He then said to me, "Do you see that boy that rideth away so fast? He will be in Scotland within this half hour; and he is gone to let them know that you are here, and to what end you are come, and the small number you have with you; and that if they will make haste, on a sudden they may surprise us, and do with us what they

please." Hereupon we took advice what was best to be done. We sent notice presently to all parts to raise the country, and to come to us with all the speed they could; and withall we sent to Carlisle to raise the townsmeu; for without foot we could do no good against the tower. There we staid some hours, expecting more company; and within short time after the country came in on all sides, so that we were quickly between three and four hundred horse; and, after some longer stay, the foot of Carlisle came to us, to the number of three or four hundred men: whom we presently set to work, to get up to the top of the tower, and to uncover the roof: and then some twenty of them to fall down together, and by that means to win the tower.—The Scots, seeing their present danger, offered to parley, and yielded themselves to my mercy. They had no sooner opened the iron gate, and yielded themselves my prisoners, but we might see 400 horse within a quarter of a mile coming to their rescue, and to surprise me and my small company; but on a sudden they stayed, and stood at gaze. Then had I more to do than ever; for all our Borderers came crying, with full mouths, 'Sir, give us leave to set upon them, for these are they that have killed our fathers, our brothers, and uncles, and our cousins; they are coming, thinking to surprise you, upon weak grass nags, such as they could get on a sudden; and God hath put them into your hands, that we may take reveuge of them for much blood that they have spilt of ours." I desired they would be patient a while, and bethought myself, if I should give them their will, there would be few or none of the Scots that would escape unkilled (there were so many deadly feuds among them;) and therefore I resolved with myself to give them a fair answer, but not to give them their desire. So I told them, that if I were not there myself, they might then do what pleased themselves; but being present, if I should give them leave, the blood that should be spilt that day would lie very hard upon my conscience. And therefore I desired them, for my sake, to forbear; and, if the Scots did not presently make away with all the speed they could, upon my sending to them, they should then have their wills to do what they pleased. They were ill satisfied with my answer, but durst not disobey. I sent with speed to the Scots, and bade them pack away with all the speed they could: for if they stayed the messenger's return, they should few of them return to their own home. They made no stay; but they were turned homewards before the messenger had made an end of his message. Thus, by God's mercy, I escaped a great danger; and by my means, there were a great many men's lives saved that day."

11. On many a cairn's gray pyramid,
Where urns of mighty chiefs lie hid.—P. 12.

The cairns, or piles of loose stones, which crown the summit of most of our Scottish hills, and are found in other remarkable situations, seem usually, though not universally, to have been sepulchral monuments. Six flat stones are commonly found in the centre, forming a cavity of greater or smaller dimensions, in which an urn is often placed. The author is possessed of one, discovered beneath an immense cairn at Roughlee, in Liddesdale. It is of the most barbarous construction; the middle of the substance alone having been subjected to the fire, over which, when hardened, the artist had laid an inner and outer coat of unbaked clay, etched with some very rude ornaments; his skill apparently being inadequate to baking the vase, when completely finished. The contents were bones and ashes, and a quantity of beads made of coal. This seems to have been a barbarous imitation of the Roman fashion of sepulture.

NOTES TO CANTO IV.

1. Great Dundee.—P. 12.

The viscount of Dundee, slain in the battle of Killiecrankie.

2. For pathless marsh, and mountain cell,
The peasant left his lowly shed.—P. 12.

The morasses were the usual refuge of the Border herdsmen on the approach of an English army. —(*Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*, vol. i, p. 49.) Caves, hewed in the most dangerous and inaccessible places, also afforded an occasional retreat. Such caverns may be seen in the precipitous banks of the Teviot at Sunlaws, upon the Ale at Aucram, upon the Jed at Hundalee, and in many other places upon the Border. The banks of the Esk, at Gorton and Hawthornden, are hollowed into similar recesses. But even these dreary dens were not always secure places of concealment. "In the way as we came, not far from this place (Long Niddry,) George Ferres, a gentleman of my lord protector's—happened upon a cave in the grounde, the mouth whereof was so worne with the fresh printe of steps, that he seemed to be certayne thear were sum folke within; and gone doune to trie, he was redily receyved with a hakebut or two. He left them not yet, till he had knowen wheyther thei wold be content to yeld and come out; which they foudly refusing, he went to my lorde's grace, and upon utterance of the thynge, gat lisense to deale with them as he coulde; and so returned to them, with a skore or two of pioners. Three ventes had their cave, that we wear ware of, whereof he first stopt up one; another he fill'd full of strawe, and set it a fyer, whereat they within east water apace; but it was so well maynteyned without, that the fyer prevayled, and thei within fayn to get them belyke into another parler. Then devysed we (for I hapt to be with him) to stop the same up, whereby we should eyther smoother them, or fynd out their vents, if thei hadde any moe: as this was done at another issue, about xii score of, we moughte see the fume of their smoke to come out; the which continued with so great a force, and so long a while, that we could not but thinke they must needs get them out, or smoother within; and forasmuch as we found not that they dyd the tone, we thought it for certain thei wear sure of the toother."—*Patten's Account of Somerset's Expedition into Scotland*, apud *Dalzell's Fragments*.

3. Southern ravage.—P. 12.

From the following fragment of a letter from the earl of Northumberland to king Henry VIII, preserved among the Cotton MSS. Calig. B. vii, 179, the reader may estimate the nature of the dreadful war which was occasionally waged upon the Borders, sharpened by mutual cruelties, and the personal hatred of the wardens, or leaders.

Some Scottish barons, says the earl, had threatened to come within "three miles of my pore house of Werkworth, where I lye, and gif me light to put on my clothes at mydnyght; and alsoo the said Marke Carr said there opynly, that, seying they had a governor on the marches of Scotland, as well as they had in Ingland, he shulde keep your highness instructions, gyffyn unto your gary

son, for making of any day-forrey; for he and his friends wolde burne enough on the nyght, lettyng your counsaill here defyne a notable acte at theyre pleasures. Upon whiche, in your highnes' name, I comaundet dewe watche to be kept on your marchies, for comyng in of any Scotts.—Neutheless, upon Thursday at night last, came thyrty light horsemen into a litil village of myne, called Whitell, having not past sex houses, lying towards Ryddisdaill, upon Shilbotell more, and there wold have fyred the said howses, but ther was noo fyre to get there, and they forgate to brynge any withe theyme; and toke a wyf, being great with childe, in the said towne, and said to hyr, Wher we can not gyve the laird lyght, yet we shall doo this in spyte of him; and gyve her iii mortall wovnds upon the heid, and another in the right side, with a dagger: wheruppon the said wyf is deede, and the childe in her bely is loste. Beseeching your most gracious highnes to reduce unto your gracious memory this wylful and shamefull murder, done within this your highnes' realme, notwithstanding all the inhabitants thereabout rose unto the said fray, and gave warnynge by becons into the countrey afore theyme, and yet the Scottsmen dyde escape. And uppon certeyne knowledge to my brother Clyfforthe and me, had by credable persons of Scotland, this abomynable act not only to be done by dyverse of the Mershe, but also the afore named persons of Tyvidaill, and consented to, as by appearance, by the erle of Murey, upon Friday at night last, let slyp C of the best horsemen of Glendaill, with a parte of your highnes' subjects of Berwyke, together with George Dowglas, whoo came into Ingland agayne, in the dawning of the day; but afore theyre retorne, they dyd mar the carl of Murrei's provisions at Coldingham: for they did not only burne the said town of Coldingham, with all the corne thereunto belonging, which is esteemed wurthe cii marke sterling: but also burned twa townes nye adjoining thereunto, called Branerdergest and Black Hill, and toke xxiii persons, lx horse, with ec hed of cataill, which nowe, as I am informed, hathe not only been a staye of the said erle of Murrei's not coming to the Bordure as yet, but alsoo, that none inlande man will adventure theyr selfs upon the marshes. And as for the tax that shuld have been grauntyd for finding of the said iii hundred men, is utterly denyed. Upon which the king of Scotland departed from Edynburgh to Stirling, and as yet there doth remayn. And also I, by the advice of my brother Clyfforth, have devysed, that within this iii nyghts, Godde willing, Kelsey, in lyke case, shall be brent, with all the corne in the said town: and then they shall have noo place to lye any garyson in nygh unto the Borders. And as I shall atteigne further knawledge, I shall not faill to satisfye your highnes, according to my most bounden dutie. And for this burnynge of Kelsey is devysed to be done secretly, by Tyndail and Ryddysdale. And thus the holy Trynite and * * * your most royal estate, with long lyf, and as much increase of honour as your most noble heart can desire. *At Werkworth, the* xxiid *day of October*, (1522.)

4. Watt Tinlinn.—P. 12.

This person was, in my younger days, the theme of many a fireside tale. He was a retainer of the Buccleuch family, and held, for his Border service, a small tower on the frontiers of Liddesdale. Watt was, by profession, a *sutor*, but, by inclination and practice, an archer and warrior. Upon one occasion, the captain of Bewcastle, military governor of that wild district of Cumberland, is said to have made an excursion into Scotland, in which he was defeated, and forced to fly. Watt Tinlinn pursued him closely through a dangerous morass; the captain, however, gained the firm ground; and seeing Tinlinn dismounted, and floundering in the bog, used these words of insult: "Sutor Watt, ye cannot sew your boots; the heels *risp*, and the seams *rive*."*—"If I cannot sew," retorted Tinlinn, discharging a shaft, which nailed the captain's thigh to his saddle,—"If I cannot sew, I can *yerk*."†

5. Bilhope Stag.—P. 12.

There is an old rhyme, which thus celebrates the places in Liddesdale remarkable for game:

Bilhope braes for bucks and raes,
And Carit haugh for swine,
And Tarras for the good bull-trout,
If he be ta'en in time.

The bucks and roes, as well as the old swine, are now extinct; but the good bull-trout are still famous.

6. Of silver brooch and bracelet proud.—P. 12.

As the Borderers were indifferent about the furniture of their habitations, so much exposed to be burnt and plundered, they were proportionally anxious to display splendour in decorating and ornamenting their females.—See LESLY, *de Moribus Limitaneorum.*

7. Belted Will Howard.—P. 13.

Lord William Howard, third son of Thomas, duke of Norfolk, succeeded to Naworth Castle and a large domain annexed to it, in right of his wife Elizabeth, sister of George lord Dacre, who died without heirs male, in the 11th of queen Elizabeth. By a poetical anachronism, he is introduced into the romance a few years earlier than he actually flourished. He was warden of the Western Marches; and, from the rigour with which he repressed the border excesses, the name of belted Will Howard is still famous in our traditions. In the castle of Naworth, his apartments, containing a bed-room, oratory, and library, are still shown. They impress us with an unpleasing idea of the life of a lord warden of the marches. Three or four strong doors, separating these rooms from the rest of the castle, indicate apprehensions of treachery from his garrison; and the secret winding passages, through which he could privately descend into the guard-room or even into the dungeons, imply the necessity of no small degree of secret superintendence on the part of the governor. As the ancient books and furniture have remained undisturbed, the venerable appearance of these apartments, and the armour scattered around the chamber, almost lead us to expect the arrival of the warden in person. Naworth Castle is situated near Brampton in Cumberland. Lord William Howard is ancestor of the earls of Carlisle.

8. Lord Dacre.—P. 13.

The well-known name of Dacre is derived from the exploits of one of their ancestors at the siege of Acre, or Ptolemais, under Richard Cœur de Lion. There were two powerful branches of that name. The first family, called lord Dacres of the South, held the castle of the same name, and are ancestors to the present lord Dacre. The other family, descended from the same stock, were cal-

* *Risp*, creak.—*Rive*, tear.

† *Yerk*, to twitch; as shoemakers do, in securing the stitches of their work.

led lord Dacres of the North, and were barons of Gilsland and Graystock. A chieftain of the latter branch was warden of the West Marches during the reign of Edward VI. He was a man of a hot and obstinate character, as appears from some particulars of lord Surrey's letter to Henry VIII, giving an account of his behaviour at the siege and storm of Jedburgh. It is printed in the *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*, Appendix to the Introduction.

9. The German Hackbut-men.—P. 13.

In the wars with Scotland, Henry VIII and his successors employed numerous bands of mercenary troops. At the battle of Pinky, there were in the English army six hundred hackbutters on foot and two hundred on horseback, composed chiefly of foreigners. On the 27th September, 1549, the duke of Somerset, lord protector, writes to the lord Dacre, warden of the West Marches: "The Almains, in number two thousand, very valiant soldiers, shall be sent to you shortly from Newcastle, together with sir Thomas Holcroft, and with the force of your wardenry, (which we would were advanced to the most strength of horsemen that might be,) shall make the attempt to Loughmaben, being of no such strength but that it may be skailed with ladders, whereof, beforehand, we would you caused secretly some number to be provided; or else undermyned with the pyke-axe, and so taken: either to be kept for the king's majesty, or otherwise to be defaced, and taken from the profits of the enemy. And in like manner the house of Carlaverock to be used." Repeated mention occurs of the Almains, in the subsequent correspondence: and the enterprise seems finally to have been abandoned, from the difficulty of providing these strangers with the necessary "victuals and carriage in so poor a country as Dunfriesshire." *History of Cumberland*, vol. i, Introd. p. lxi. From the battle-pieces of the ancient Flemish painters, we learn, that the Low Country and German soldiers marched to an assault with their right knees bared. And we may also observe, in such pictures, the extravagance to which they carried the fashion of ornamenting their dress with knots of ribband. This custom of the Germans is alluded to in the *Mirrour for Magistrates*, p. 121.

> Their pleited garments therewith well accord,
> All jagde and frounst, with divers colours deckt.

10. His ready lances Thirlestane brave
Array'd beneath a banner bright.—P. 13.

Sir John Scott of Thirlestane flourished in the reign of James V, and possessed the estates of Thirlestane, Gamescleuch, &c. lying upon the river Ettrick, and extending to St. Mary's Loch, at the head of Yarrow. It appears, that when James had assembled his nobility, and their feudal followers, at Fala, with the purpose of invading England, and was, as is well known, disappointed by the obstinate refusal of his peers, this baron alone declared himself ready to follow the king wherever he should lead. In memory of his fidelity, James granted to his family a charter of arms, entitling them to bear a border of fleurs-de-luce, similar to the treasure in the royal arms, with a bundle of spears for the crest; motto, *Ready, ay ready*. The charter itself is printed by Nisbet; but his work being scarce, I insert the following accurate transcript from the original, in the possession of the right honourable lord Napier, the representative of John of Thirlestane.

"JAMES REX.

"We James, be the grace of God, king of Scottis, considerand the ffaith and guid servise of of of* right traist friend John Scott of Thirlestane, quha cummand to our hoste at Soutraedge, with three score and ten launciers on horseback of his friends and followers, and beand willing to gang with ws into England, when all our nobles and others refused, he was reddy to stake all at our bidding; ffor the quhilk cause, it is our will, and we doe straitlie command and charg our lion herauld, and his deputies for the time beand, to give and to graunt to the said John Scott, ane Border of fleure-de-lises about his coatte of arms, sik as is on our royal banner, and alsua ane bundell of launces above his helmet, with thir words, Readdy, ay Readdy, that he and all his after-cummers may bruik the samine as a pledge and taiken of our guid will and kyndnes for his true worthiness: and thir our letters seen, ye nae wayes failze to doe. Given at Ffalla Muire, under our hand and privy cashet, the xxvii day of July, me, xxxii zeires. By the king's graces speciall ordinance. *Jo. Arskine.*"

On the back of the charter, is written,

"Edin. 14. January, 1713. Registred, conform to the act of parliament made anent probative writs, per M'Kaile, pror. and produced by Alexander Borthwick, servant to sir William Scott of Thirlestane. M. L. J."

11. An aged knight to danger steel'd,
With many a moss-trooper came o'er,
And azure in a golden field,
The stars and crescent graced his shield,
Without the bend of Murdieston.—P. 13.

The family of Harden are descended from a younger son of the laird of Buccleuch, who flourished before the estate of Murdieston was acquired by the marriage of one of those chieftains with the heiress, in 1296. Hence they bear the cognizance of the Scotts upon the field; whereas those of the Buccleuch are disposed upon a bend dexter, assumed in consequence of that marriage. See *Gladstaine of Whitelaw's MSS.* and *Scott of Stokoe's Pedigree*, Newcastle, 1783.

Walter Scott of Harden, who flourished during the reign of queen Mary, was a renowned Border freebooter, concerning whom tradition has preserved a variety of anecdotes, some of which have been published in the *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*, others in *Leyden's Scenes of Infancy*, and others more lately, in *The Mountain Bard*, a collection of Border ballads by Mr. James Hogg. The bugle horn, said to have been used by this formidable leader, is preserved by his descendant, the present Mr. Scott of Harden.—His castle was situated upon the very brink of a dark and precipitous dell, through which a scanty rivulet steals to meet the Borthwick. In the recess of this glen he is said to have kept his spoil, which served for the daily maintenance of his retainers, until the production of a pair of clean spurs, in a covered dish, announced to the hungry band that they must ride for a supply of provisions. He was married to Mary Scott, daughter of Philip Scott of Dryhope, and called in song the Flower of Yarrow. He possessed a very extensive estate, which was divided among his five sons. There are numerous descendants of this old marauding baron. The following beautiful passage of *Leyden's Scenes of Infancy*, is founded on a tradition respecting an infant captive, whom Walter of Harden carried off in a pre-

* Sic in orig.

datory incursion, and who is said to have become the author of some of our most beautiful pastoral songs.

Where Bortha hoarse, that loads the meads with sand,
Rolls her red tide to Teviot's western strand,
Through slaty hills, whose sides are shagged with thorn,
Where springs, in scatter'd tufts, the dark-green corn,
Towers wood-girt Harden, far above the vale,
And clouds of ravens o'er the turrets sail.
A hardy race, who never shrunk from war,
The *Scott*, to rival realms a mighty bar,
Here fixed his mountain home;—a wide domain,
And rich the soil, had purple heath been grain;
But, what the niggard ground of wealth denied,
From fields more blessed his fearless arm supplied.

The waning harvest-moon shone cold and bright;
The warder's horn was heard at dead of night;
And, as the massy portals wide were flung,
With stamping hoofs the rocky pavement rung.
What fair, half-veil'd, leans from her latticed-hall,
Where red the wavering gleams of torch-light fall?
'Tis Yarrow's fairest Flower, who, through the gloom,
Looks, wistful, for her lover's dancing plume.
Amid the piles of spoil, that strewed the ground,
Her ear, all anxious, caught a wailing sound;
With trembling haste the youthful matron flew,
And from the hurried heaps an infant drew.

Scared at the light, his little hands he flung
Around her neck, and to her bosom clung;
While beauteous Mary soothed, in accents mild,
His fluttering soul, and clasped her foster child.
Of milder mood the gentle captive grew,
Nor loved the scenes that scared his infant view;
In vales remote, from camps and castles far,
He shunn'd the fearful shuddering joy of war;
Content the loves of simple swains to sing,
Or wake to fame the harp's heroic string.

His are the strains, whose wandering echoes thrill
The shepherd, lingering on the twilight hill,
When evening brings the merry folding hours,
And sun-eyed daisies close their winking flowers.
He lived, o'er Yarrow's Flower to shed the tear;
To strew the holly leaves o'er Harden's bier;
But none was found above the minstrel's tomb,
Emblem of peace, to bid the daisy bloom:
He, nameless as the race from which he sprung,
Saved other names, and left his own unsung.

12. Scotts of Eskdale, a stalwart band.—P. 13.

In this, and the following stanza, some account is given of the mode in which the property of the valley of Esk was transferred from the Beattisons, its ancient possessors, to the name of Scott. It is needless to repeat the circumstances, which are given in the poem, literally as they have been preserved by tradition. Lord Maxwell, in the latter part of the sixteenth century, took upon himself the title of earl of Morton. The descendants of Beattison of Woodkerricke, who aided the earl to escape from his disobedient vassals, continued to hold these lands within the memory of man, and were the only Beattisons who had property in the dale. The old people give locality to the story, by showing the Galliard's Haugh, the place where Buccleuch's men were concealed, &c.

13. Their gathering word was Bellenden.—P. 14.

Bellenden is situate near the head of Borthwick water, and, being in the centre of the possessions of the Scotts, was frequently used as their place of rendezvous and gathering word.—Survey of Selkirkshire, in *Macfarlane's MSS.* Advocates' Library. Hence Satchells calls one part of his genealogical account of the families of that clan, his Bellenden.

14. The camp their home, their law the sword,
They knew no country, own'd no lord.—P. 14.

The mercenary adventurers, whom, in 1380, the earl of Cambridge carried to the assistance of the king of Portugal against the Spaniards, mutinied for want of regular pay. At an assembly of their leaders, sir John Soltier, a natural son of Edward the Black Prince, thus addressed them: "I counsayle, let us be alle of one alliance, and of one accorde, and let us among ourselves reyse up the banner of St. George, and let us be frendes to God, and enemyes to alle the worlde; for without we make ourselfe to be feared, we gette nothing."

"By my fayth," quod sir William Helmon, "ye saye right well, and so let us do." They all agreed with one voyce, and so regarded among them who shulde be their capitayne. Then they advysed in the case how they coude not have a better capitayne than sir John Soltier. For they sulde than have good leyser to do yvell, and they thought he was more metteyler thereto than any other. Then they raised up the pencn of St. George, and cried "a Soltier! a Soltier! the valyaunt bastarde! frends to God, and enemies to all the worlde!" *Froissart*, vol. i, ch. 393.

15. A gauntlet on a spear.—P. 15.

A glove upon a lance was the emblem of faith among the ancient Borderers, who were wont, when any one broke his word, to expose this emblem, and proclaim him a faithless villain at the first Border meeting. This ceremony was much dreaded. See *Lesly.*

16. We claim from thee William of Deloraine,
That he may suffer march-treason pain.—P. 15.

Several species of offences, peculiar to the Border, constituted what was called march-treason. Among others, was the crime of riding or causing to ride, against the opposite country during the time of truce. Thus, in an indenture made at the water of Eske, beside Salom, the 25th day of March, 1354, betwixt noble lords and mighty, sirs Henry Percy, earl of Northumberland, and Archibald Douglas, lord of Galloway, a truce is agreed upon until the 1st day of July; and it is expressly accorded, "Gif ony stellis, authir on the ta part, or on the tothyr, that he shall be henget or heofdit; and gif ony cumpany stellis any gudes within the trieux beforesayd, ane of that company shall be hanget or heofdit, and the remnant sall restore the guds stolen in the dubble."—*History of Westmoreland and Cumberland*, Introd. p. xxxix.

17. ——————William of Deloraine
Will cleanse him, by oath, of march-treason stain.—P. 15.

In dubious cases, the innocence of Border criminals was occasionally referred to their own oath. The form of excusing bills, or indictments, by Border-oath, ran thus: "You shall swear by heaven above you, hell beneath you, by your part of Paradise, by all that God made in six days and seven nights, and by God himself, you are whart out sackless of art, part, way, witting, ridd, kenning, having, or receiving of any of the goods and cattels named in this bill. So help you God."—*History of Cumberland*, Introd. p. xxv.

18. Knighthood he took of Douglas' sword.—P. 15.

The dignity of knighthood, according to the original institution, had this peculiarity, that it did not flow from the monarch, but could be conferred by one who himself possessed it, upon any squire who, after due probation, was found to merit the honour of chivalry. Latterly, this power was confined to generals, who were wont to create knights bannerets after or before an engagement. Even so late as the reign of queen Elizabeth, Essex highly offended his jealous sovereign by the indiscriminate exercise of this privilege. Amongst others, he knighted the witty sir John Harrington, whose

favour at court was by no means enhanced by his new honours.—See the *Nugæ Antiquæ*, edited by Mr. Park. But probably the latest instance of knighthood, conferred by a subject, was in the case of Thomas Ker, knighted by the earl of Huntley, after the defeat of the earl of Argyle in the battle of Belrinnes. The fact is attested, both by a poetical and prose account of the engagement, contained in an ancient MS. in the Advocates' Library, and lately edited by Mr. Dalyell, in *Godly Sangs and Ballets*, Edin. 1802

19. When English blood swell'd Ancram ford.—P. 15.

The battle of Ancram Moor, or Peniel-heuch, was fought A. D. 1545. The English, commanded by sir Ralph Evers, and sir Bryan Latoun, were totally routed, and both their leaders slain in the action. The Scottish army was commanded by Archibald Douglas, earl of Angus, assisted by the laird of Buccleuch and Norman Lesly.

20. The blanche lion. —P. 16.

This was the cognizance of the noble house of Howard in all its branches. The crest, or bearing of a warrior, was often used as a *nomme de guerre*. Thus Richard III, acquired his well known epithet *The Boar of York*. In the violent satire on Cardinal Wolsey, written by Roy, commonly but erroneously, imputed to Dr. Bull, the duke of Buckingham is called the *Beautiful Swan*, and the duke of Norfolk, or earl of Surrey, the *White Lion*. As the book is extremely rare, and the whole passage relates to the emblematical interpretation of heraldry, it shall be here be given at length.

The Description of the arms.

Of the proud cardinal this is the shielde,
Borne up betwene two angels of Sathan;
The sixe bloody axes in a bare fielde,
Sheweth the cruelte of the red man,
Which hath devoured the Beautiful Swan,
Mortal enemy unto the Whyte Lion,
Carter of Yorke, the vyle butcher's sonne.
The sixe bulles heddes in a fielde blacke,
Betokeneth his sturdy furiousness,
Wherefore, the godly lyght to put abacke,
He brynge-th in his dyvilish darenes;
The bandog in the middes doth expresse
The mastiff curre bred in Ypswich towne,
Gnawynge with his teeth a kinges crowne.
The cloubbe signifieth playne his tiranny,
Covered over with a cardinal's hatt,
Wherein shall be fulfilled the prophecy,
Aryse up Jacke, and put on thy salatt,
For the time is come of bagge and walatt,
The temporall chevalry thus thrown downe.
Wherfor, prest, take hede, and beware thy crowne.

There were two copies of this very scarce satire in the library of the late John duke of Roxburgh. See an account of it also in sir Egerton Bridges's curious miscellany, the *Censura Literaria*.

21. Let Musgrave meet fierce Deloraine
In single fight.—P. 16.

It may easily be supposed, that trial by single combat, so peculiar to the feudal system, was common on the Borders. In 1558, the well-known Kirkaldy of Grange fought a duel with Ralph Evre, brother to the then lord Evre, in consequence of a dispute about a prisoner said to have been ill treated by the lord Evre. Pitscottie gives the following account of the affair: "The lord of Ivers his brother provoked William Kircaldy of Grange to fight with him, in single combat, on horseback, with spears; who, keeping the appointment, accompanied with Monsieur d'Ossel, lieutenant to the French king, and the garrison of Haymouth, and Mr. Ivers, accompanied with the governor and garrison of Berwick, it was discharged, under the pain of treason, that any man should come near the champions within flight-shot, except one man for either of them, to bear their spears, two trumpets, and two lords to be judges. When they were in readiness, the trumpets sounded, the hearalds cried, and the judges let them go. Then they encountered very fiercely; but Grange struck his spear through his adversary's shoulder, and bare him off his horse, being sore wounded: but whether he died or not, it is uncertain."—P. 202.

The following indenture will show at how late a period the trial by combat was resorted to on the border, as a proof of guilt or innocence:

It is agreed between Thomas Musgrave and Lancelot Carleton, for the true trial of such controversies as are betwixt them, to have it openly tried by way of combat, before God and the face of the world, to try it in Canonbyholme, before England and Scotland, upon Thursday in Easter-week, being the eighth day of April next ensuing, A. D. 1602, betwixt nine of the clock, and one of the same day, to fight on foot, to be armed with jack, steel cap, plaite sleeves, plaite breaches, plaite sockes, two basleard swords, the blades to be one yard and a half quarter of length, two Scotch daggers, or dorks, at their girdles, and either of them to provide armour and weapons for themselves according to this indenture. Two gentlemen to be appointed on the field, to view both the parties: to see that both be equal in arms and weapons, according to this indenture; and being so viewed by the gentlemen, the gentlemen to ride to the rest of the company, and to leave them but two boys, viewed by the gentlemen, to be under sixteen years of age, to hold their horses. In testimony of this our agreement, we have both set our hands to this indenture, of intent all matters shall be made so plain, as there shall be no question to stick upon that day. Which indenture, as a witness, shall be delivered to two gentlemen. And for that it is convenient the world should be privy to every particular of the grounds of the quarrel, we have agreed to set it down in this indenture betwixt us, that knowing the quarrel, their eyes may be witness of the trial.

The grounds of the Quarrel.

"1. Lancelot Carleton did charge Thomas Musgrave before the lordes of her majesty's privy council, that Lancelot Carleton was told by a gentleman, one of her majesty's sworn servants, that Thomas Musgrave had offered to deliver her majesty's castle of Bewcastle to the king of Scots; and to witness the same, Lancelot Carleton had a letter under the gentleman's own hand for his discharge.

"2. He chargeth him, that whereas her majesty doth yearly bestow a great fee upon him, as captain of Bewcastle, to aid and defend her majesty's subjects therein; Thomas Musgrave hath neglected his duty, for that her majesty's castle of Bewcastle was by him made a den of thieves, and an harbour and receipt for murderers, felons, and all sorts of misdemeanors. The precedent was Quintin Whitehead and Runion Blackburne.

"3. He chargeth him, that his office of Bewcastle is open for the Scotch to ride in and through, and small resistance made by him to the contrary."

"Thomas Musgrave doth deny all this charge; and saith that he will prove that Lancelot Carleton doth falsely bely him, and will prove the same

by way of combat, according to this indenture. Lancelot Carleton hath entertained this challenge, and so, by God's permission, will prove it true as before, and hath set his hand to the same.

(Signed) *Thomas Musgrave.*
Lancelot Carleton."

22. He, the jovial Harper.—P. 16.

The person here alluded to, is one of our ancient Border minstrels called Rattling Roaring Willie. This *soubriquet* was probably derived from his bullying disposition: being, it would seem, such a roaring boy, as is frequently mentioned in old plays. While drinking at Newmill, upon Teviot, about five miles above Hawick, Willie chanced to quarrel with one of his own profession, who was usually distinguished by the odd name of Sweet Milk, from a place on Rule water so called. They retired to a meadow, on the opposite side of the Teviot, to decide the contest with their swords, and Sweet Milk was killed on the spot. A thorn-tree marks the scene of the murder, which is still called Sweet Milk Thorn. Willie was taken and executed at Jedburgh, bequeathing his name to the beautiful Scotch air, called "Rattling Roaring Willie." Ramsay, who set no value on traditionary lore, published a few verses of this song in the *Tea Table Miscellany*, carefully suppressing all which had any connexion with the history of the author, and origin of the piece. In this case, however, honest Allan is in some degree justified, by the extreme worthlessness of the poetry. A verse or two may be taken as illustrative of the history of Roaring Willie, alluded to in the text.

Now Willie's gane to Jeddart,
And he's for the *rood-day;**
But Stobs and young Falnash,†
They followed him a' the way;
They followed him a' the way,
They sought him up and down,
In the links of Ousenam water,
They found him sleeping sound.

Stobs lighted aff his horse,
And never a word he spak,
Till he tied Willie's hands
Fu' fast behind his back;
Fu' fast behind his back,
And down beneath his knee,
And drink will be dear to Willie,
When Sweet Milk‡ gars him die.

Ah, wae light on ye, Stobs!
An ill death mot ye die!
Ye're the first and foremost man
That e'er laid hands on me;
That e'er laid hands on me,
And took my mare me fra;
Wae to you, sir Gilbert Elliot!
Ye are my mortal fae!

The lasses of Ousenam water
Are rugging and riving their hair,
And a' for the sake of Willie,
His beauty was so fair;
His beauty was so fair,
And comely for to see,
And drink will be dear to Willie,
When Sweet Milk gars him die.

23. Black lord Archibald's battle laws,
In the old Douglas' day.—P. 16.

The title to the most ancient collection of Border regulations runs thus:

"Be it remembered, that, on the 18th day of December, 1468, earl *William Douglas* assembled the whole lords, free-holders, and eldest Borderers, that best knowledge had, at the college of *Lin-clouden*, and there he caused those lords and Borderers bodily to be sworn, the Holy Gospel touched, that they, justly and truly, after their cunning, should decrete, decern, deliver, and put in order and writing, the statutes, ordinances, and uses of marche, that were ordained in *Black Archibald* of *Douglas's* days, and Archibald his son's days, in time of warfare; and they came again to him advisedly with these statutes and ordinances, which were in time of warfare before. The said earl *William*, seeing the statutes in writing decreed and delivered by the said lords and Borderers, thought them right speedful and profitable to the Borderers: the which statutes, ordinances, and points of warfare, he took, and the whole lords and Borderers he caused bodily to be sworn, that they should maintain and supply him at their goodly power, to do the law upon those that should break the statutes underwritten. Also, the said earl *William*, and lordes and eldest Borderers, made certain points to be treason in time of warfare to be used, which were no treason before his time, but to be treason in his time and all time coming.

* The day of the rood fair at Jedburgh.
† Sir Gilbert Elliot of Stobs, and Scott of Falnash.
‡ A wretched pun on his antagonist's name.

NOTES TO CANTO V.

1. The Bloody Heart blazed in the van,
Announcing Douglas, dreaded name.—P. 17.

The chief of this potent race of heroes, about the date of the poem, was Archibald Douglas, seventh earl of Angus, a man of great courage and activity. The Bloody Heart was the well-known cognizance of the house of Douglas, assumed from the time of good lord James, to whose care Robert Bruce committed his heart to be carried to the Holy Land.

2. The Seven Spears of Wedderburne.—P. 17.

Sir David Home of Wedderburne, who was slain in the fatal battle of Flodden, left seven sons by his wife Isabel, daughter of Hoppringle of Galashiels (now Pringle of Whitebank.) They were called the Seven Spears of Wedderburne.

3. And Swinton laid the lance in rest,
That tamed of yore the sparkling crest
Of Clarence's Plantagenet.—P. 17.

At the battle of Beague, in France, Thomas, duke of Clarence, brother to Henry V, was unhorsed by sir John Swinton, of Swinton, who distinguished him by a coronet set with precious stones, which he wore around his helmet. The family of Swinton is one of the most ancient in Scotland, and produced many celebrated warriors.

4. Beneath the crest of old Dunbar,
And Hepburn's mingled banners, come,
Down the steep mountain glittering far,
And shouting still, "A Home! a Home!"—P. 17.

The earls of Home, as descendants of the Dunbars, ancient earls of March, carried a lion rampant, argent, but as a difference, changed the colour of the shield from gules to vert, in allusion to Greenlaw, their ancient possession. The slogan or war-cry, of this powerful family was, "A home! a home!" It was anciently placed in an escrol above the crest. The helmet is armed with a lion's head erased gules, with a cap of state gules, turned up ermine.

The Hepburns, a powerful family in East Lothian, were usually in close alliance with the Homes. The chief of this clan was Hepburn, lord of Hailes; a family which terminated in the too famous earl of Bothwell.

5. Pursued the foot-ball play.—P. 18.

The foot-ball was anciently a very favourite sport all through Scotland, but especially upon the Borders. Sir John Carmichael, of Carmichael, warden of the middle marches, was killed in 1600 by a band of the Armstrongs, returning from a foot-ball match. Sir Robert Carey, in his memoirs, mentions a great meeting, appointed by the Scottish riders to be held at Kelso, for the purpose of playing at foot-ball, but which terminated in an incursion upon England. At present the foot-ball is often played by the inhabitants of adjacent parishes, or of the opposite banks of a stream. The victory is contested with the utmost fury, and very serious accidents have sometimes taken place in the struggle.

6. 'Twixt truce and war, such sudden change
Was not infrequent, nor held strange,
In the old Border day.—P. 18.

Notwithstanding the constant wars upon the Borders, and the occasional cruelties which marked the mutual inroads, the inhabitants on either side do not appear to have regarded each other with that violent and personal animosity, which might have been expected. On the contrary, like the outposts of hostile armies, they often carried on something resembling friendly intercourse, even in the middle of hostilities; and it is evident, from various ordinances against trade and intermarriages between English and Scottish Borderers, that the governments of both countries were jealous of their cherishing too intimate a connexion. Froissart says of both nations, that "Englyshmen on the one party, and Scottes on the other party, are good men of warre; for when they meet, there is a hard fight without sparynge. There is no hoo (*truce*) between them, as long as spears, swords, axes, or daggers will endure, but lay on eche upon uther; and whan they be well beaten, and that the one party hath obtained the victory, they then glorifye so in theyre dedes of armes, and are so joyful, that such as be taken they shall be ransomed or that they go out of the felde; so that shortly eche of them is so content with other, that at their departynge curtyslye they will say, God thank you."—*Berner's Froissart*, vol. ii, p. 153. The Border meetings of truce, which, although places of merchandise and merriment, often witnessed the most bloody scenes, may serve to illustrate the description in the text. They are vividly portrayed in the old ballad of the Reidsquair. Both parties came armed to a meeting of the wardens, yet they intermixed fearlessly and peaceably with each other in mutual sports and familiar intercourse, until a casual fray arose;

Then was there nought but bow and spear;
And every man pulled out a brand.

In the 29th Stanza of this Canto, there is an attempt to express some of the mixed feelings, with which the Borderers on each side were led to regard their neighbours.

7. And frequent on the darkening plain,
Loud hollo, whoop, or whistle ran;
As bands, their stragglers to regain,
Gave the shrill watch-word of their clan.—P. 18.

Patten remarks, with bitter censure, the disorderly conduct of the English Borderers, who attended the Protector Somerset on his expedition against Scotland. "As we wear then a setling, and the tents a setting up, among all things els commendable in our hole journey, one thing seemed to me an intolerable disorder and abuse: that whereas always, both in all tounes of war, and in all campes of armies, quietness and stilnes, without nois, is, principally in the night, after the watch is set, observed, (I nede not reason why,) our northern prikkers, the Borderers, notwithstandyng, with great enormitie, (as thought me,) and not unlike (to be playn) unto a masterles hounde howlyng in a hie wey when he hath lost him he waited upon, some hoopynge, sum whistlyng and most with crying, a Berwyke, a Berwyke! a Fenwyke, a Fenwyke! a Bulmer, a Bulmer! or so otherwise as theyr captains names wear, never lin'de these troublous and dangerous noyses all the nyghte longe. They said, they did it to finde their captain and fellows; but if the soldiers of our other countreys and sheres had used the same manner, in that case we should have oft tymes had the state of our camp more like the outrage of a dissolute huntyng, than the quiet of a well ordred armye. It is a feat of war, in mine opinion, that might right well be left. I could reherse causes (but yf I take it, they are better unspoken than uttred, unless the faut wear sure to be amended) that might shew thei move alweis more peral to our armie, but in their one nyght's so doynge, than they shew good service (as sum sey) in a hool vyage."—*Apud* DALZELL'S *Fragments*, p. 75.

8. Cheer the dark blood-hound on his way,
And with the bugle rouse the fray.—P. 21.

The pursuit of Border marauders was followed by the injured party and his friends with blood-hounds and bugle-horn, and was called the *hot trod* He was entitled, if his dog could trace the scent, to follow the invaders into the opposite kingdom; a privilege which often occasioned blood-shed. In addition to what has been said of the blood-hound, I may add, that the breed was kept up by the Buccleuch family on their Border estates till within the 18th century. A person was alive in the memory of man, who remembered a blood-hound being kept at Eldinhope, in Ettrick Forest, for whose maintenance the tenant had an allowance of meal. At that time the sheep were always watched at night. Upon one occasion, when the duty had fallen on the narrator, then a lad, he became exhausted with fatigue, and fell asleep, upon a bank, near sun-rising. Suddenly he was awakened by the tread of horses, and saw five men, well mounted and armed, ride briskly over the edge of the hill. They stopped and looked at the flock, but the day was too far broken to admit the chance of their carrying any of them off. One of them, in spite, leaped from his horse, and coming to the shepherd, siezed him by the belt he wore round his waist, and setting his foot upon his body, pulled it till it broke, and carried it away with him. They rode off at the gallop; and, the shepherd giving the alarm, the blood-hound was turned loose; and the people in the neighbourhood alarmed. The marauders, however, escaped notwithstanding a sharp pursuit. This circumstance serves to show how very long the license of the Borderers continued in some degree to manifest itself.

NOTES TO CANTO VI.

1. Breathes there the man, with soul so dead, &c. P. 21.

The influence of local attachment has been so exquisitely painted by my friend Mr. Polwhele, in the poem which bears that title, as might well have dispensed with the more feeble attempt of any con-

temporary poet. To the reader who has not been so fortunate as to meet with this philosophical and poetical detail of the nature and operations of the love of our country, the following brief extract cannot fail to be acceptable:—

Yes—home still charms; and he, who, clad in fur,
His rapid rein-deer drives o'er plains of snow,
Would rather to the same wild tracts recur
That various life had mark'd with joy or wo,
Than wander where the spicy breezes blow
To kiss the hyacinths of Azza's hair——
Rather, than where luxuriant summers glow,
To the white mosses of his hills repair,
And bid his antler-train the simple banquet share.

2. She wrought not by forbidden spell.—P. 21.

Popular belief, though contrary to the doctrines of the church, made a favourable distinction betwixt magicians and necromancers, or wizards: the former were supposed to command the evil spirits, and the latter to serve, or at least to be in league and compact with those enemies of mankind. The arts of subjecting the dæmons were manifold: sometimes the fiends were actually swindled by the magicians, as in the case of a bargain betwixt one of their number and the poet Virgil. The classical reader will, doubtless, be curious to peruse this anecdote:

"Virgilius was at scole at Tolenton, where he stodyed dylygently, for he was of great understandyng. Upon a tyme, the scolars had lycense to go to play and sporte them in the fyldes, after the usance of the olde time. And there was also Virgilius therebye, also walkyng among the bylles alle about. It fortuned he spyed a great hole in the syde of a great hyll, wherein he went so depe, that he culd not see no more lyght; and then he went a lytell farther therein, and then he saw some lyght agayne, and then he went fourth streyghte, and within a lytyll wyle after he harde a voyce that called, 'Virgilius! Virgilius!' and looked aboute, and he colde nat see no body. Than said he, (i. e. *the voice*) 'Virgilius, see ye not the lytyll bourde lying beside you there marked with that word?' Than answered Virgilius, 'I see that borde well anough.' The voyce said, 'Doo awaye that borde, and lette me out thereatte.' Then answered Virgilius to the voyce that was under the lytell borde, and sayde, 'Who art thou that callest me so?' Than answered the devyll, 'I am a devyll conjured out of the body of a certeyne man, and banysshed here till the day of judgment, without that I be delyvered by the handes of men. Thus, Virgilius, I pray thee, delyver me out of this payn, and I shall shewe unto the many bokes of negromancye, and how thou shalt come by it lyghtly, and know the practyse therein, that no man in the seyence of negromancye shall passe thee. And moreover, I shall shewe and enforme the so, that thou shalt have all thy desyre, whereby mythynke it is a great gyfte for so lytell a doyng. For ye may also thus all your power fryndes help, and make ryche your enemyes.'—Through that great promyse was Virgilius tempted: he badde the fynd show the bokes to him, that he might have and occupy them at his wyll: and so the fynde showed him. And than Virgilius pulled open a borde, and there was a lytell hole, and thereat wrang the devil out lyke a yeel, and eam and stood before Virgilius like a bygge man: whereof Virgilius was astonished and marveyled greatly thereof, that so great a man myght come out at so little a hole. Than sayd Virgilius, 'Shulde ye weil passe into the hole that ye eam out of?'—'Yea, I shall well,' said the devyl. 'I hold the best plegge that I have, that ye shall not do it.' 'Well,' said the devyl, 'thereto I consent.' And than the devyl wrang himself into the lytell hole ageyne: and as he was therein, Virgilius kyvered the hole ageyne with the bourde close, and so was the devyl begyled, and myght nat there come out agen, but abydeth shutte styll therein. Then called the devyl dredefully to Virgilius, and said, 'What have ye done, Virgilius?' Virgilius answered, 'Abyde there styll to your day appoynted;' and fro thens forth abyeth he there.—And so Virgilius became very connynge in the practyse of the black seyence."

This story may remind the reader of the Arabian tale of the fisherman and the imprisoned genie: and it is more than probable, that many of the marvels narrated in the life of Virgil are of oriental extraction. Among such I am disposed to reckon the following whimsical account of the foundation of Naples, containing a curious theory concerning the origin of the earthquakes with which it is afflicted. Virgil, who was a person of gallantry, had, it seems, carried off the daughter of a certain Soldan, and was anxious to secure his prize.

"Then he thoughte in his mynde howe he myghte mareye hyr, and thought in his mynde to founde in the middes of the sea a fayer towne, with great lands belongyng to it; and so he dyed by his cunnyge, and called it Napells. And the fandacyon of it was of egges, and in that town of Napells he made a tower with iiii corners, and in the top he set an appell upon an yron yarde, and no man culd pull away that apell without he brake it; and thorough that yren set he a bolte, and in that bolte set he an egge. And he henge the apell by the stauke upon a cheyne, and so hangeth is still. And when the egg styrreth, so shulde the town of Napells quake: and whan the egge brake, than shuld the town sinke. Whan he had made an ende, he lette call it Napells." This appears to have been an article of current belief during the middle ages, as appears from the statutes of the order *Du Saint Esprit, au droit desir*, instituted in 1352. A chapter of the knights is appointed to be held annually at the castle of the enchanted egg, near the grotto of Virgil.—*Montfaucon*, vol. ii, p. 329.

3. A merlin sat upon her wrist.—P. 22.

A merlin or sparrow-hawk was usually carried by ladies of rank, as a falcon was, in time of peace, the constant attendant of a knight, or baron. See *Latham on Falconry*—Godscroft relates, that, when Mary of Lorraine was regent, she pressed the earl of Angus to admit a royal garrison into his castle of Tantallon. To this he returned no direct answer; but, as if apostrophising a goss-hawk which sat on his wrist, and which he was feeding during the queen's speech, he exclaimed, "The Devil's in this greedy glade, she will never be full." *Hume's History of the House of Douglas*, 1743, vol. ii, p. 131. Barclay complains of the common and indecent practice of bringing hawks and hounds into churches.

4. And princely peacock's gilded train.—P. 22.

The peacock, it is well known, was considered, during the times of chivalry, not merely as an exquisite delicacy, but as a dish of peculiar solemnity. After being roasted, it was again decorated with its plumage, and a sponge, dipt in lighted spirits of wine, was placed in its bill. When it was

introduced on days of grand festival, it was the signal for the adventurous knights to take upon them vows to do some deed of chivalry, "before the peacock and the ladies."

5. And o'er the boar-head, garnish'd brave.—P. 22.

The boar's head was also a usual dish of feudal splendour. In Scotland it was sometimes surrounded with little banners, displaying the colours and achievements of the baron, at whose board it was served. *Pinkerton's History*, vol. i, p. 432.

6. And cygnet from St. Mary's wave.—P. 22.

There are often flights of wild swans upon St. Mary's lake at the head of the river Yarrow.

7. Smote, with his gauntlet, stout Hunthill.—P. 22.

The Rutherfords of Hunthill were an ancient race of Border lairds, whose names occur in history, sometimes as defending the frontier against the English, sometimes as disturbing the peace of their own country. Diekon Draw-the-sword was son to the ancient warrior, called in tradition the Cock of Hunthill.

8. But bit his glove, and shook his head.—P. 22.

To bite the thumb, or the glove, seems not to have been considered, upon the Border, as a gesture of contempt, though so used by Shakspeare, but as a pledge of mortal revenge. It is yet remembered, that a young gentleman of Teviotdale, on the morning after a hard drinking-bout, observed, that he had bitten his glove. He instantly demanded of his companions, with whom he had quarrelled? and learning that he had had words with one of the party, insisted on instant satisfaction, asserting, that though he remembered nothing of the dispute, yet he was sure he never would have bit his glove unless he had received some unpardonable insult. He fell in the duel, which was fought near Selkirk, in 1721.

9. Arthur Fire-the-Braes.—P. 22.

The person, bearing this redoubtable *nomme de guerre*, was an Elliot, and resided at Thorleshope, in Liddesdale. He occurs in the list of Border riders, in 1597.

10. Since old Buccleuch the name did gain,
When in the cleuch the buck was ta'en.—P. 22.

A tradition, preserved by Scott of Satchells, who published, in 1688, *A true history of the right honourable name of Scott*, gives the following romantic origin of that name. Two brethren, natives of Galloway, having been banished from that country for a riot, or insurrection, came to Rankelburn, in Ettrick forest, where the keeper, whose name was Brydone, received them joyfully, on account of their skill in winding the horn, and in the other mysteries of the chase.—Kenneth Mac-Alpine, then king of Scotland, came soon after to hunt in the royal forest, and pursued a buck from Ettrickheuch to the glen now called Buckleuch, about two miles above the junction of Rankelburn with the river Ettrick.—Here the stag stood at bay; and the king and his attendants, who followed on horseback, were thrown out by the steepness of the hill and the morass. John, one of the brethren from Galloway, had followed the chase on foot: and now coming in, seized the buck by the horns, and, being a man of great strength and activity, threw him on his back, and ran with his burden about a mile up the steep hill, to a place called Cracra-Cross, where Kenneth had halted, and laid the buck at the sovereign's feet.*

The deer being curee'd in that place,
At his majesty's demand,
Then John of Galloway ran apace,
And fetched water to his hand.
The king did wash into a dish,
And Galloway John he wot;
He said, "Thy name now after this
Shall ever be called John Scott.

"The forest and the deer therein,
We commit to thy hand,
For thou shalt sure the ranger be,
If thou obey command:
And for the buck thou stoutly brought
To us up that steep heuch,
Thy designation ever shall
Be John Scot in Buckscleugh.

* * * * * *

In Scotland no Buckleuch was then,
Before the buck in the cleuch was slain;
Night's moon* at first they did appear,
Because moon and stars to their arms they bear.
Their crest, supporters, and hunting-horn,
Shows their beginning from hunting come;
Their name and stile, the book doth say,
John gained them both into one day. *Watt's Bellenden.*

The Buccleuch arms have been altered, and now allude less pointedly to this hunting, whether real or fabulous. The family now bear *Or* upon a bend azure, a mullet betwixt two crescents of the field; in addition to which, they formerly bore in the field a hunting horn. The supporters, now two ladies, were formerly a hound and buck, or, according to the old terms, *a hart of leash* and *a hart of greece*. The family of Scott of Howpasley and Thirlestane long retained the bugle-horn: they also carried a bent bow and arrow in the sinister cantle, perhaps as a difference. It is said the motto was—*Best riding by moon-light*, in allusion to the crescents on the shield, and perhaps to the habits of those who bore it. The motto now given is *Amo*, applying to the female supporters.

11. ——old Albert Græme,
The Minstrel of that ancient name.—P. 22.

"John Grahame, second son of *Malice*, earl of *Monteith*, commonly surnamed *John with the bright sword*, upon some displeasure risen against him at court, retired with many of his clan and kindred, into the English Borders, in the reign of king Henry

*Froissart relates, that a knight of the household of the Compte de Foix exhibited a similar feat of strength. The hall-fire had waxed low, and wood was wanted to mend it. The knight went down to the court-yard, where stood an ass laden with faggots, seized on the animal and his burden, and carrying him up to the hall on his shoulders, tumbled him into the chimney with his heels uppermost; a humane pleasantry, much applauded by the court and all the spectators.

* "Minions of the moon," as Falstaff would have said. The vocation pursued by our ancient Borderers may be justified on the authority of the most polished of the ancient nations: "For the Grecians in old time, and such barbarians as in the continent lieved neere into the sea, or else inhabited the islands, after they once began to cross over one to another in ships, became theeves, and went abroad under the conduct of their more puissant men, both to enrich themselves, and to fetch in maintenance for the weak; and falling upon towns unfortified, or scatteringly inhabited, rifled them, and made this the best means of their living; being a matter at that time nowhere in disgrace, but rather carrying with it something of glory. This is manifested by some that dwell upon the continent, amongst whom, so it be performed nobly, it is still esteemed as an ornament. The same is also proved by some of the ancient poets, who introduced men questioning of such as sail by, on all coasts alike, whether they be theeves or not; as a thing neyther scorned by such as were asked, nor upbraided by those that were desireus to know. They also robbed one another within the main land; and much of Greece useth that old custome, as the *Locrians*, the *Acarnanians*, and those of the continent in that quarter, unto this day. Moreover, the fashion of wearing iron remaineth yet with the people of that continent, from their old trade of theeving."—*Hobbes' Thucydides*, p. 4, Lond. 1629.

the fourth, where they seated themselves: and many of their posterity have continued there ever since. Mr. Sandford speaking of them, says (which indeed was applicable to most of the Borderers on both sides,) they were all stark moss-troopers, and arrant thieves: Both to England and Scotland outlawed; yet sometimes connived at, because they gave intelligence forth of Scotland, and would raise 400 horse at any time upon a raid of the English into Scotland. A saying is recorded of a mother to her son (which is now become proverbial,) *Ride, Rowley, hough's i' the pot;* that is, the last piece of beef was in the pot, and therefore it was high time for him to go and fetch more. *Introduction to the History of Cumberland.*

The residence of the Grœmes being chiefly in the Debateable land, so called because it was claimed by both kingdoms, their depredations extended both to England and Scotland, with impunity, for as both wardens accounted them the proper subjects of their own prince, neither inclined to demand reparation for their excesses from the opposite officers, which would have been an acknowledgment of his jurisdiction over them.—See a long correspondence on this subject betwixt lord Dacre and the English privy council, in Introduction to *History of Cumberland.* The Debateable land was finally divided betwixt England and Scotland, by commissioners appointed by both nations.

12. The sun shines fair on Carlisle wall.—P. 22.

This burden is adopted, with some alteration, from an old Scottish song, beginning thus:

> She leaned her back against a thorn,
> The sun shines fair on Carlisle wa';
> And there she has her young babe born,
> And the lyon shall be lord of a'.

13. Who has not heard of Surrey's fame?—P. 23.

The gallant and unfortunate Henry Howard, earl of Surrey, was unquestionably the most accomplished cavalier of his time; and his sonnets display beauties which would do honour to a more polished age. He was beheaded on Tower-hill in 1546; a victim to the mean jealousy of Henry VIII, who could not bear so brilliant a character near his throne.

The song of the supposed bard is founded on an incident said to have happened to the earl in his travels. Cornelius Agrippa, the celebrated alchemist, showed him, in a lookingglass, the lovely Geraldine, to whose service he had devoted his pen and his sword. The vision represented her as indisposed, and reclined upon a couch, reading her lover's verses by the light of a waxen taper.

14. ———The storm-swept Orcades;
Where erst St Clairs held princely sway,
O'er isle and islet, strait and bay.—P. 23.

The St. Clairs are of Norman extraction, being descended from William de St. Clair, second son of Walderne compte de St. Clair, and Margaret, daughter to Richard duke of Normandy. He was called for his fair deportment, the seemly St. Clair; and settling in Scotland during the reign of Malcolm Ceanmore, obtained large grants of land in Mid-Lothian.—These domains were increased by the liberality of succeeding monarchs to the descendants of the family, and comprehended the baronies of Roseline, Pentland, Cowsland, Cardaine, and several others. It is said a large addition was obtained from Robert Bruce, on the following occasion: The king, in following the chase upon Pentland hills, had often started "a white faunch deer," which had always escaped from his hounds; and he asked the nobles, who were assembled around him, whether any of them had dogs, which they thought might be more successful. No courtier would affirm that his hounds were fleeter than those of the king, until sir William St. Clair of Rosecline unceremoniously said, he would wager his head that his two favourite dogs, *Help* and *Hold*, would kill the deer before she could cross the March-burn. The king instantly caught at his unwary offer, and betted the forest of Pentlandmoor against the life of sir William St. Clair. All the hounds were tied up, except a few ratches, or slow hounds, to put up the deer; while sir William St. Clair, posting himself in the best situation for slipping his dogs, prayed devoutly to Christ, the blessed Virgin, and St. Katherine. The deer was shortly after roused, and the hounds slipped; sir William following on a gallant steed, to cheer his dogs. The hind, however, reached the middle of the brook, upon which the hunter threw himself from his horse in despair. At this critical moment, however, Hold stooped her in the brook; and Help, coming up, turned her back, and killed her on sir William's side. The king descended from the hill, embraced sir William, and bestowed on him the lands of Kirkton, Logan-house, Earneraig, &c. in free forestrie. Sir William, in acknnowledgment of St. Katherine's intercession, built the chapel of St. Katherine in the Hopes, the churchyard of which is still to be seen. The hill, from which Robert Bruce beheld this memorable chase, is still called the King's Hill; and the place where sir William hunted is called the knight's field.*—*MS. History of the family of St. Clair, by Richard Augustin Hay, Canon of St. Genevieve.*

This adventurous huntsman married Elizabeth, daughter of Malice Spar, earl of Orkney and Stratherne, in whose right their son Henry was, in 1379, created earl of Orkney, by Haco, king of Norway. His title was recognized by the kings of Scotland, and remained with his successors until it was annexed to the crown, in 1471, by act of Parliament. In exchange for this earldom, the castle and domains of Ravenscraig, or Ravensheuch, were conferred on William Saintclair, earl of Caithness.

15. Still nods their palace to its fall,
Thy pride and sorrow, fair Kirkwall.—P. 23

The castle of Kirkwall was built by the St. Clairs, while earls of Orkney. It was dismantled by the earl of Caithness about 1615, having been garrisoned against the government by Robert Stewart, natural son to the earl of Orkney.

Its ruins afforded a sad subject for contemplation to John, master of St. Clair, who, flying from his native country, on account of his share in the insurrection, in 1715, made some stay at Kirkwall.

* The tomb of sir William St. Clair, on which he appears sculptured in armour, with a greyhound at his feet, is still to be seen in Rosline chapel. The person who shows it, always tells the story of his hunting match, with some addition to Mr. Hay's account; as that the knight of Rosline's fright made him poetical, and that, in the last emergency, he shouted,

> Help, haud, an' ye may,
> Or Roslin will lose his head this day.

If this couplet does him no great honour as a poet, the conclusion of the story does him still less credit. He set his foot on the dog, says the narrator, and killed him on the spot, saying, he should never again put his neck in such a risk. As Mr. Hay does not mention this circumstance, I hope it is only founded on the couchant posture of the hound on the monument.

"I had occasion to entertain myself at Kirkwall with the melancholie prospect of the ruins of an old castle, the seat of the old earls of Orkney, my ancestors; and of a more melancholy reflection, of so great and noble an estate as the Orkney and Shetland isles being taken from one of them by James III, for faultrie after his brother Alexander, duke of Albany, had married a daughter of my family, and for protecting and defending the said Alexander against the king, who wished to kill him, as he had done his youngest brother, the earl of Mar; and for which, after the forfaultrie, he *gratefully* divorced my forfaulted ancestor's sister; though I cannot persuade myself that he had any misalliance to plead against a familie in whose veins the blood of Robert Bruce ran as fresh as in his own; for their title to the crowne was by a daughter of David Bruce, son to Robert; and our alliance was by marrying a grandchild of the same Robert Bruce, and daughter to the sister of the same David, out of the familie of Douglas, which at that time did not much sullie the blood, more than my ancestour's having not long before, had the honour of marrying a daughter of the king of Denmark's, who was named Florentine, and has left in the town of Kirkwall a noble monument of the grandeur of the times, the finest church ever I saw entire in Scotland. I then had no small reason to think, in that unhappy state, on the many not inconsiderable services rendered since to the royal familie, for these many years by-gone, on all occasions, when they stood most in need of friends, which they have thought themselves very often obliged to acknowledge by letters yet extant, and in a stile more like friends than sovereigns: our attachment to them, without anie other thanks, having brought upon us considerable losses, and among others, that of our all in Cromwell's time; and I lt in that condition, without the least relief except what we found in our own virtue. My father was the only man of the Scotts nation who had courage enough to protest in parliament against king William's title to the throne, which was lost, God knows how; and this at a time when the losses in the cause of the royall familie and their usual gratitude, had scarce left him bread to maintain a numerous familie of eleven children, who had soon after sprung up on him, in spite of all which, he had honourably persisted in his principle. I say, these things considered, and after being treated as I was, and in that unluckie state, when objects appear to men in their true light, as at the hour of death, could I be blamed for making some bitter reflections to myself, and laughing at the extravagance and unaccountable humour of men, and the singularitie of my own case, (an exile for the cause of the Stuart family,) when I ought to have known, that the greatest crime I, or my family, could have committed, was persevering to my own destruction, in serving the royal familie faithfully, though obstinately, after so great a share of depression; and after they had been pleased to doom me and my familie to starve."—*MS. Memoirs of John, Master of St. Clair.*

16. Kings of the main their leaders brave,
Their barks the dragons of the wave.—P. 23.

The chiefs of the *Vakingr*, or Scandinavian pirates, assumed the title of *Sækonungr*, or Sea-kings. Ships, in the inflated language of the Scalds, are often termed the serpents of the ocean.

17. Of that sea-snake, tremendous curl'd,
Whose monstrous circle girds the world.—P. 24.

The *jormungandr*, or snake of the ocean, whose folds surround the earth, is one of the wildest fictions of the Edda. It was very nearly caught by the god Thor, who went to fish for it with a hook baited with a bull's head. In the battle betwixt the evil demons and the divinities of Odin, which is to precede the *Ragnaraokr*, or Twilight of the gods, this snake is to act a conspicuous part.

18. Of those dread maids, whose hideous yell
Maddens the battle's bloody swell.—P. 24.

These were the *Valkyriur*, or selectors of the slain, despatched by Odin from Valhalla, to choose those who were to die, and to distribute the contest. They are well known to the English reader, as Gray's Fatal Sisters.

19. Ransack'd the graves of warriors old,
Their falchions wrench'd from corpses' hold.—P. 24.

The northern warriors were usually entombed with their arms, and their other treasures. Thus, Angantyr, before commencing the duel in which he was slain, stipulated, that if he fell, his sword Tyrfing should be buried with him. His daughter, Hervor, afterward took it from his tomb. The dialogue which passed betwixt her and Angantyr's spirit on this occasion has often been translated. The whole history may be found in the Harvarar-Saga. Indeed the ghosts of the northern warriors were not wont tamely to suffer their tombs to be plundered; and hence the mortal heroes had an additional temptation to attempt such adventures; for they held nothing more worthy of their valour than to encounter supernatural beings.—BARTHOLINUS *De causis contemptæ a Danis mortis*, lib. 1, cap. 2, 9, 10, 13.

20. —— Rosabelle.—P. 24.

This was a family name in the house of St. Clair. Henry St. Clair, the second son of the line, married Rosabelle, fourth daughter of the earl of Stratherne.

21. Castle Ravensheuch.—P. 24.

A large and strong castle, now ruinous, situated betwixt Kirkaldy and Dysart, on a steep crag, washed by the Frith of Forth. It was conferred on sir William St. Clair, as a slight compensation for the earldom of Orkney, by a charter of king James III, dated in 1471, and is now the property of sir James St. Clair Erskine, (now earl of Rosslyn,) representative of the family. It was long a principal residence of the barons of Roslin.

22. Seem'd all on fire that chapel proud,
Where Roslin's chiefs uncoffin'd lie;
Each baron, for a sable shroud,
Sheathed in his iron panoply.—P. 24.

The beautiful chapel of Roslin is still in tolerable preservation. It was founded in 1446 by William St. Clair, prince of Orkney, duke of Oldenburgh, earl of Caithness and Stratherne, lord St. Clair, lord Niddesdale, lord admiral of the Scottish seas, lord chief justice of Scotland, lord warden of the three Marches, baron of Roslin, Pentland, Pentlandmoor, &c. knight of the Cockle and of the Garter, (as is affirmed,) high chancellor, chamberlain, and lieutenant of Scotland. This lofty person, whose titles, says Godscroft, might weary a Spaniard, built the castle of Roslin, where he resided in princely splendour, and founded the chapel, which is in the most rich and florid style of Gothic architecture. Among the profuse carving on the pillars and buttresses, the rose is frequently introduced, in allusion to the name, with

which, however, the flower has no connexion; the etymology being Rosslinnhe, the promontory of the linn or water-fall. The chapel is said to appear on fire previous to the death of any of his descendants. This superstition, noticed by Slezer in his *Theatrum Scotiæ*, and alluded to in the text, is probably of Norwegian derivation, and may have been imported by the earls of Orkney into their Lothian domains. The tomb-fires of the north are mentioned in most of the Sagas.

The barons of Roslin were buried in a vault beneath the chapel floor. The manner of their interment is thus described by Father Hay, in the MS. history already quoted.

"Sir William Sinclair, the father, was a leud man. He kept a miller's daughter, with whom, it is alledged, he went to Ireland: yet I think the cause of his retreat was rather occasioned by the Presbyterians, who vexed him sadly, because of his religion being Roman Catholic. His son, sir William, died during the troubles, and was interred in the chapel of Roslin the very same day that the battle of Dunbar was fought. When my good father was buried, his (i. e. sir William's) corpse seemed to be entire at the opening of the cave; but when they came to touch his body, it fell into dust. He was lying in his armour, with a red velvet cap on his head, on a flat stone; nothing was spoiled except a piece of the white furring, that went round the cap, and answered to the hinder part of the head. All his predecessors were buried after the same manner, in their armour: late Rosline, my good father, was the first that was buried in a coffin; against the sentiments of king James the Seventh, who was then in Scotland, and several other persons well versed in antiquity, to whom my mother would not hearken, thinking it beggarly to be buried after that manner. The great expenses she was at in burying her husband, occasioned the sumptuary acts which were made in the following parliament."

23. ——"Gylbin, come!"—P. 24.

See the story of Gilpin Horner, p. 36, in notes.

24. For he was speechless, ghastly, wan,
Like him, of whom the story ran,
Who spoke the spectre-hound in Man.—P. 24.

The ancient castle of Peel-town, in the Isle of Man, is surrounded by four churches now ruinous. Through one of these chapels, there was formerly a passage from the guard-room of the garrison. This was closed, it is said, upon the following occasion: "They say, that an apparition, called in the Mankish language, the *Mauthe Doog*, in the shape of a large black spaniel, with curled shaggy hair, was used to haunt Peel-castle; and has been frequently seen in every room, but particularly in the guard-chamber, where, as soon as candles were lighted, it came and lay down before the fire, in presence of all the soldiers, who, at length, by being so much accustomed to the sight of it, lost great part of the terror they were seized with at its first appearance. They still, however, retained a certain awe, as believing it was an evil spirit, which only waited permission to do them hurt; and, for that reason, forbore swearing, and all prophane discourse, while in its company. But though they endured the shock of such a guest when all together in a body, none cared to be left alone with it. It being the custom, therefore, for one of the soldiers to lock the gates of the castle at a certain hour, and cary the keys to the captain, to whose apartment, as I said before, the way led through the church, they agreed among themselves, that whoever was to succeed the ensuing night his fellow in this errand, should accompany him that went first, and by this means no man would be exposed singly to the danger: for I forgot to mention, that the *Mauthe Doog* was always seen to come out from that passage at the close of day, and return to it again as soon as the morning dawned; which made them look on this place as its peculiar residence.

"One night, a fellow being drunk, and by the strength of the liquor rendered more daring than ordinarily, laughed at the simplicity of his companions; and, though it was not his turn to go with the keys, would needs take that office upon him to testify his courage. All the soldiers endeavoured to dissuade him; but the more they said, the more resolute he seemed, and swore that he desired nothing more than that the *Mauthe Doog* would follow him as it had done the others; for he would try if it were dog, or devil. After having talked in a very reprobate manner for some time, he snatched up the keys, and went out of the guard-room: in some time after his departure, a great noise was heard, but nobody had the boldness to see what occasioned it, till the adventurer returning, they demanded the knowledge of him; but as loud and noisy as he had been at leaving them, he was now become sober and silent enough; for he was never heard to speak more: and though all the time he lived, which was three days, he was entreated by all who came near him, either to speak, or if he could not do that, to make some signs, by which they might understand what had happened to him; yet nothing intelligible could be got from him, only that by the distortion of his limbs and features, it might be guessed that he died in agonies more than is common in a natural death.

"The *Mauthe Doog* was however never after seen in the castle, nor would any one attempt to go through that passage; for which reason it was closed up, and another way made. This accident happened about threescore years since: and I heard it attested by several, but especially by an old soldier, who assured me he had seen it oftener than he had then hairs on his head."—*Waldron's Description of the Isle of Man*, p. 107.

25. And he a solemn sacred plight
Did to St. Bryde of Douglas make.—P. 25.

This was a favourite saint of the house of Douglas, and of the earl of Angus in particular, as we learn from the following passage. The queen regent had proposed to raise a rival noble to the ducal dignity; and discoursing of her purpose with Angus he answered, "Why not madam? we are happy that have such a princess, that can know and will acknowledge men's service, and is willing to recompence it: but, by the might of God, (this was his oath when he was serious and in anger, at other times, it was by St. Bride of Douglas,) if he be a duke, I will be a drake!"—So she desisted from prosecuting of that purpose.—*Godscroft*, vol. ii, p. 131.

Marmion.

A TALE OF FLODDEN FIELD.

Alas! that Scottish maid should sing
The combat where her lover fell!
That Scottish Bard should wake the string,
The triumph of our foes to tell. *Leyden.*

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE HENRY, LORD MONTAGUE, &c.

THIS ROMANCE IS INSCRIBED, BY THE AUTHOR.

[illegible] That bloomed so nigh on Needwath-fell

That hems our little garden in,
Low in its dark and narrrow glen,
You scarce the rivulet might ken,
So thick the tangled green-wood grew,
So feeble trilled the streamlet through:
Now, murmuring hoarse, and frequent seen
Through bush and brier, no longer green,
An angry brook, it sweeps the glade,
Brawls over rock and wild cascade,
And, foaming brown with double speed,
Hurries its waters to the Tweed.
No longer Autumn's glowing red
Upon our forest hills is shed;
No more, beneath the evening beam,
Fair Tweed reflects their purple gleam;
Away hath passed the heather-bell,

[illegible]
The buried warlike, and the wise?
The mind, that thought for Britain's weal,
The hand, that grasped the victor steel?
The vernal sun new life bestows
Even on the meanest flower that blows;
But vainly, vainly may he shine,
Where glory weeps o'er Nelson's shrine;
And vainly pierce the solemn gloom
That shrouds, O Pitt, thy hallowed tomb!
Deep graved in every British heart,
O never let those names depart!
Say to your sons,—Lo, here his grave,
Who victor died on Gadite wave;
To him, as to the burning levin,
Short, bright, resistless course was given;

which, however, the flower has no connexion; the etymology being Rosslinnhe, the promontory of the linn or water-fall. The chapel is said to appear on fire previous to the death of any of his descendants. This superstition, noticed by Slezer in his *Theatrum Scotiæ*, and alluded to in the text, is probably of Norwegian derivation, and may have been imported by the earls of Orkney into their Lothian domains. The tomb-fires of the north are mentioned in most of the Sagas.

The barons of Roslin were buried in a vault beneath the chapel floor. The manner of their interment is thus described by Father Hay, in the MS. history already quoted.

"Sir William Sinclair, the father, was a leud man. He kept a miller's daughter, with whom, it is alledged, he went to Ireland: yet I think the cause of his retreat was rather occasioned by the

ther in a body, none cared to be left alone with it. It being the custom, therefore, for one of the soldiers to lock the gates of the castle at a certain hour, and cary the keys to the captain, to whose apartment, as I said before, the way led through the church, they agreed among themselves, that whoever was to succeed the ensuing night his fellow in this errand, should accompany him that went first, and by this means no man would be exposed singly to the danger: for I forgot to mention, that the *Mauthe Doog* was always seen to come out from that passage at the close of day, and return to it again as soon as the morning dawned; which made them look on this place as its peculiar residence.

"One night, a fellow being drunk, and by the strength of the liquor rendered more daring than ordinarily, laughed at the simplicity of his com-

the [illegible]chamber, where, as soon as candles were lighted, it came and lay down before the fire, in presence of all the soldiers, who, at length, by being so much accustomed to the sight of it, lost great part of the terror they were seized with at its first appearance. They still, however, retained a certain awe, as believing it was an evil spirit, which only waited permission to do them hurt; and, for that reason, forbore swearing, and all prophane discource, while in its company. But though they endured the shock of such a guest when all toge-

gent had pro[illegible]d to raise a rival noble to the ducal dignity; and discoursing of her purpose with Angus he answered, "Why not madam? we are happy that have such a princess, that can know and will acknowledge men's service, and is willing to recompence it: but, by the might of God, (this was his oath when he was serious and in anger, at other times, it was by St. Bride of Douglas,) if he be a duke, I will be a drake!"—So she desisted from prosecuting of that purpose.—*Godscroft*, vol. ii, p. 131.

Marmion.

A TALE OF FLODDEN FIELD.

Alas! that Scottish maid should sing
The combat where her lover fell!
That Scottish Bard should wake the string,
The triumph of our foes to tell. *Leyden.*

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE HENRY, LORD MONTAGUE, &c.

THIS ROMANCE IS INSCRIBED, BY THE AUTHOR.

ADVERTISEMENT.

It is hardly to be expected, that an author, whom the public has honoured with some degree of applause, should not be again a trespasser on their kindness. Yet the author of *Marmion* must be supposed to feel some anxiety concerning its success, since he is sensible that he hazards, by this second intrusion, any reputation which his first poem may have procured him. The present story turns upon the private adventures of a fictitious character; but is called a Tale of Flodden Field, because the hero's fate is connected with that memorable defeat, and the causes which led to it. The design of the author was, if possible to apprise his readers, at the outset, of the date of his story, and to prepare them for the manners of the age in which it is laid. Any historical narrative, far more an attempt at epic composition, exceeds his plan of a romantic tale; yet he may be permitted to hope from the popularity of *The Lay of the Last Minstrel*, that an attempt to paint the manners of the feudal times, upon a broader scale, and in the course of a more interesting story, will not be unacceptable to the public.

The poem opens about the commencement of August and concludes with the defeat of Flodden, 9th September, 1513.

MARMION.

INTRODUCTION TO CANTO I.

TO WILLIAM STEWART ROSE, Esq.

Ashestiel, Ettrick Forest.

November's sky is chill and drear,
November's leaf is red and sear:
Late, gazing down the steepy linn,
That hems our little garden in,
Low in its dark and narrow glen,
You scarce the rivulet might ken,
So thick the tangled green-wood grew,
So feeble trilled the streamlet through:
Now, murmuring hoarse, and frequent seen
Through bush and brier, no longer green,
An angry brook, it sweeps the glade,
Brawls over rock and wild cascade,
And, foaming brown with double speed,
Hurries its waters to the Tweed.

No longer Autumn's glowing red
Upon our forest hills is shed;
No more, beneath the evening beam,
Fair Tweed reflects their purple gleam;
Away hath passed the heather-bell,
That bloomed so rich on Needpath-fell,
Sallow his brow, and russet bare
Are now the sister-heights of Yare.
The sheep, before the pinching heaven,
To sheltered dale and down are driven,
Where yet some faded herbage pines,
And yet a watery sunbeam shines:
In meek despondency they eye
The withered sward and wintry sky,
And far beneath their summer hill,
Stray sadly by Glenkinnon's rill:
The shepherd shifts his mantle's fold
And wraps him closer from the cold;
His dogs no merry circles wheel,
But, shivering, follow at his heel;
A cowering glance they often cast,
As deeper moans the gathering blast.

My imps, though hardy, bold, and wild,
As best befits the mountain child,
Feel the sad influence of the hour,
And wail the daisy's vanished flower;
Their summer gambols tell, and mourn,
And anxious ask,—Will spring return,
And birds and lambs again be gay,
And blossoms clothe the hawthorn spray?

Yes, prattlers, yes. The daisy's flower
Again shall paint your summer bower;
Again the hawthorn shall supply
The garlands you delight to tie;
The lambs upon the lea shall bound,
The wild birds carol to the round,
And while you frolick light as they,
Too short shall seem the summer day.

To mute and to material things
New life revolving summer brings;
The genial call dead Nature hears,
And in her glory re-appears.
But Oh! my country's wintry state
What second spring shall renovate?
What powerful call shall bid arise
The buried warlike, and the wise?
The mind, that thought for Britain's weal,
The hand, that grasped the victor steel?
The vernal sun new life bestows
Even on the meanest flower that blows;
But vainly, vainly may he shine,
Where glory weeps o'er Nelson's shrine;
And vainly pierce the solemn gloom
That shrouds, O Pitt, thy hallowed tomb!

Deep graved in every British heart,
O never let those names depart!
Say to your sons,—Lo, here his grave,
Who victor died on Gadite wave;
To him, as to the burning levin,
Short, bright, resistless course was given;

Where'er his country's foes were found,
Was heard the fated thunder's sound,
Till burst the bolt on yonder shore,
Rolled, blazed, destroyed,—and was no more.
Nor mourn ye less his perished worth,
Who bade the conqueror go forth,
And launched that thunderbolt of war
On Egypt, Hafnia,* Trafalgar;
Who, born to guide such high emprise,
For Britain's weal was early wise;
Alas! to whom the Almighty gave,
For Britain's sins, an early grave;
His worth, who, in his mightiest hour,
A bauble held the pride of power,
Spurned at the sordid lust of pelf,
And served his Albion for herself;
Who, when the frantic crowd amain
Strained at subjection's bursting rein,
O'er their wild mood full conquest gained,
The pride, he would not crush, restrained,
Showed their fierce zeal a worthier cause,
And brought the freeman's arm to aid the freeman's laws.

Had'st thou but lived, though stripped of power,
A watchman on the lonely tower,
Thy thrilling trump had roused the land,
When fraud or danger were at hand;
By thee, as by the beacon-light,
Our pilots had kept course aright;
As some proud column, though alone,
Thy strength had propped the tottering throne.
Now is the stately column broke,
The beacon-light is quenched in smoke,
The trumpet's silver sound is still,
The warder silent on the hill!
Oh, think, how to his latest day,
When death, just hovering, claimed his prey,
With Palinure's unaltered mood,
Firm at his dangerous post he stood;
Each call for needful rest repelled,
With dying hand the rudder held,
Till, in his fall, with fateful sway,
The steerage of the realm gave way!
Then, while on Britain's thousand plains
One unpolluted church remains,
Whose peaceful bells ne'er sent around
The bloody tocsin's maddening sound,
But still, upon the hallowed day,
Convoke the swains to praise and pray;
While faith and civil peace are dear,
Grace this cold marble with a tear,—
He, who preserved them, PITT, lies here!
Nor yet suppress the generous sigh,
Because his rival slumbers nigh;
Nor be thy *requiescat* dumb,
Lest it be said o'er Fox's tomb.
For talents mourn, untimely lost,
When best employed, and wanted most;
Mourn genius high, and lore profound,
And wit that loved to play, not wound;
And all the reasoning powers divine,
To penetrate, resolve, combine;
And feelings keen, and fancy's glow,—
They sleep with him who sleeps below:
And, if thou mourn'st they could not save
From error him who owns this grave,
Be every harsher thought suppressed,
And sacred be the last long rest.
Here, where the end of earthly things
Lays heroes, patriots, bards, and kings;
Where stiff the hand, and still the tongue,
Of those who fought, and spoke, and sung;
Here, where the fretted aisles prolong
The distant notes of holy song,
As if some angel spoke agen,
All peace on earth, good-will to men;
If ever from an English heart,
O *here* let prejudice depart,
And, partial feeling cast aside,
Record, that Fox a Britain died!
When Europe crouched to France's yoke,
And Austria bent, and Prussia broke,
And the firm Russian's purpose brave
Was bartered by a timorous slave,
Even then dishonour's peace he spurned,
The sullied olive-branch returned,
Stood for his country's glory fast,
And nailed her colours to the mast!
Heaven, to reward his firmness, gave
A portion in this honoured grave;
And ne'er held marble in its trust
Of two such wond'rous men the dust.

With more than mortal powers endowed,
How high they soared above the crowd!
Theirs was no common party race,
Jostling by dark intrigue for place;
Like fabled Gods, their mighty war
Shook realms and nations in its jar;
Beneath each banner proud to stand,
Looked up the noblest of the land,
Till through the British world were known
The names of PITT and Fox alone.
Spells of such force no wizard grave
E'er framed in dark Thessalian cave,
Though his could drain the ocean dry,
And force the planets from the sky.
These spells are spent, and, spent with these,
The wine of life is on the lees.
Genius, and taste, and talent gone,
For ever tombed beneath the stone,
Where—taming thought to human pride!
The mighty chiefs sleep side by side.
Drop upon Fox's grave the tear,
'Twill trickle to his rival's bier;
O'er PITT's the mournful requiem sound,
And Fox's shall the notes rebound.
The solemn echo seems to cry,—
"Here let their discord with them die;
Speak not for those a separate doom,
Whom fate made brothers in the tomb,
But search the land of living men,
Where wilt thou find their like agen?"

Rest, ardent Spirits! till the cries
Of dying Nature bid you rise;
Not even your Britain's groans can pierce
The leaden silence of your hearse:
Then, O how impotent and vain
This grateful tributary strain!
Though not unmarked from northern clime,
Ye heard the Border Minstrel's rhyme:
His Gothic harp has o'er you rung;
The bard you deigned to praise, your deathless names has sung.

Stay yet illusion, stay awhile,
My wildered fancy still beguile!
From this high theme how can I part,
Ere half unloaded is my heart!
For all the tears e'er sorrow drew,
And all the raptures fancy knew,
And all the keener rush of blood,
That throbs through bard in bard-like mood,
Were here a tribute mean and low,
Though all their mingled streams could flow—

* Copenhagen.

Wo, wonder, and sansation high,
In one spring-tide of ecstasy!—
It will not be—it may not last—
The vision of enchantment's past:
Like frost-work in the morning ray,
The fancied fabric melts away;
Each Gothic arch, memorial stone,
And long, dim, lofty aisle are gone,
And, lingering last, deception dear,
The choir's high sounds die on my ear.
Now slow return the lonely down,
The silent pastures bleak and brown,
The farm begrit with copse-wood wild,
The gambols of each frolic child,
Mixing their shrill cries with the tone
Of Tweed's dark waters rushing on.
Prompt on unequal tasks to run,
Thus Nature disciplines her son:
Meeter, she says, for me to stray,
And waste the solitary day,
In plucking from yon fen the reed,
And watch it floating down the Tweed;
Or idly list the shrilling lay
With which the milk-maid cheers her way,
Marking its cadence rise and fail,
As from the field, beneath her pail,
She trips it down the uneven dale:
Meeter for me, by yonder cairn,
The ancient shepherd's tale to learn,
Though oft he stop in rustic fear,
Lest his old legends tire the ear
Of one, who, in his simple mind,
May boast of book-learned taste refined.
But thou, my friend, canst fitly tell,
(For few have read romance so well,)
How still the legendary lay
O'er poet's bosom holds its sway;
How on the ancient minstrel strain
Time lays his palsied hand in vain;
And how our hearts at doughty deeds,
By warriors wrought in steely weeds,
Still throb for fear and pity's sake;
As when the champion of the lake
Enters Morgana's fated house,
Or in the Chapel Perilous,
Despising spells and demons' force,
Holds converse with the unburied corse;[1]
Or when, dame Ganore's grace to move,
(Alas! that lawless was their love,)
He sought proud Tarquin in his den,
And freed full sixty knights; or when,
A sinful man, and unconfessed,
He took the Sangreal's holy quest,
And, slumbering, saw the vision high,
He might not view with waking eye.[2]
The mightiest chiefs of British song
Scorned not such legends to prolong:
They gleam through Spenser's elfin dream,
And mix in Milton's heavenly theme;
And Dryden, in immortal strain,
Had raised the Table Round again,
But that a ribald king and court
Bade him toil on, to make them sport;
Demanded for their niggard pay,
Fit for their souls, a looser lay,
Licentious satire, song, and play;[3]
The world defrauded of the high design,
Profaned the God-given strength, and marred the lofty line.
Warmed by such names, well may we then,
Though dwindled sons of little men,
Essay to break a feeble lance
In the fair fields of old romance;
Or seek the moated castle's cell,
Where long through talisman and spell,
While tyrants ruled, and damsels wept,
Thy Genius, Chivalry, hath slept:
There sound the harpings of the North,
Till he awake and sally forth,
On venturous quest to prick again,
In all his arms, with all his train,
Shield, lance, and brand, and plume, and scarf,
Fay, giant, dragon, squire, and dwarf,
And wizard, with his wand of might,
And errant maid on palfrey white.
Around the Genius weave their spells,
Pure Love, who scarce his passion tells;
Mystery, half veiled and half revealed;
And Honour, with his spotless shield;
Attention, with fixed eye; and Fear,
That loves the tale he shrinks to hear;
And gentle Courtesy; and Faith,
Unchanged by sufferings, time, or death;
And Valour, lion-mettled lord,
Leaning upon his own good sword.
Well has thy fair achievement shown,
A worthy meed may thus be won;
Ytene's* oaks—beneath whose shade,
Their theme the merry minstrels made,
Of Ascapart, and Bevis bold,[4]
And that red king,† who, while of old,
Through Boldrewood the chase he led,
By his loved huntsman's arrow bled—
Ytene's oaks have heard again
Renewed such legendary strain;
For thou hast sung, how he of Gaul,
That Amadis, so famed in hall,
For Oriana, foiled in fight
The necromancer's felon might;
And well in modern verse hast wove
Partenopex's mystic love:
Hear then, attentive to my lay,
A knightly tale of Albion's elder day.

CANTO I.

THE CASTLE.

I.

Day set on Norham's castled steep,
And Tweed's fair river, broad and deep,[5]
And Cheviot's mountains lone:
The battled towers, the donjon keep,[6]
The loop-hole grates where captives weep,
The flanking walls that round it sweep,
In yellow lustre shone.
The warriors on the turrets high,
Moving athwart the evening sky,
Seemed forms of giant height:
Their armour, as it caught the rays
Flashed back again the western blaze,
In lines of dazzling light.

II.

St. George's banner, broad and gay,
Now faded, as the fading ray
Less bright, and less, was flung;
The evening gale had scarce the power
To wave it on the donjon tower,
So heavily it hung.
The scouts had parted on their search,
The castle gates were barred;
Above the gloomy portal arch,
Timing his footseps to a march,

* The new forest in Hampshire, anciently so called.
† William Rufus.

The warder kept his guard;
Low humming, as he paced along,
Some ancient border-gathering song.

III.

A distant trampling sound he hears;
He looks abroad, and soon appears,
O'er Horncliff-hill, a plump* of spears,
Beneath a pennon gay:
A horseman, darting from the crowd,
Like lightning from a summer cloud,
Spurs on his mettled courser proud,
Before the dark array.
Beneath the sable palisade,
That closed the castle barricade,
His bugle horn he blew;
The warder hasted from the wall,
And warned the captain in the hall,
For well the blast he knew;
And joyfully that knight did call
To sewer, squire, and seneschal.

IV.

"Now broach ye a pipe of Malvoisie,
Bring pasties of the doe,
And quickly make the entrance free,
And bid my heralds ready be,
And every minstrel sound his glee,
And all our trumpets blow;
And from the platform, spare ye not
To fire a noble salvo-shot;
Lord Marmion waits below!"—
Then to the castle's lower ward
Sped forty yeomen tall,
The iron-studded gates unbarred,
Raised the portcullis' ponderous guard,
The lofty palisade unsparred,
And let the drawbridge fall.

V.

Along the bridge lord Marmion rode,
Proudly his red-roan charger trod,
His helm hung at the saddle bow;
Well, by his visage, you might know
He was a stalworth knight, and keen,
And had in many a battle been;
The scar on his brown cheek revealed
A token true of Bosworth field;
His eyebrow dark, and eye of fire,
Showed spirit proud, and prompt to ire:
Yet lines of thought upon his cheek
Did deep design and counsel speak.
His forehead, by his casque worn bare,
His thin moustache, and curly hair,
Coal-black, and grizzled here and there,
But more through toil than age;
His square turned joints, and strength of limb,
Showed him no carpet knight so trim,
But, in close fight, a champion grim,
In camps, a leader sage.

VI.

Well was he armed from head to heel,
In mail, and plate of Milan steel;[7]
But his strong helm, of mighty cost,
Was all with burnished gold embossed;
Amid the plumage of the crest
A falcon hovered on her nest,
With wings outspread, and forward breast;
E'en such a falcon, on his shield,
Soared sable in an azure field:
The golden legend bore aright,
"*Who checks at me, to death is dight.*"[8]
Blue was the charger's broidered rein;
Blue ribbons decked his arching mane;
The knightly housing's ample fold
Was velvet blue, and trapped with gold.

VII.

Behind him rode two gallant squires,
Of noble name, and knightly sires;
They burned the gilded spurs to claim;
For well could each a war-horse tame,
Could draw the bow, the sword could sway,
And lightly bear the ring away;
Nor less with courteous precepts stored,
Could dance in hall, and carve at board,
And frame love-ditties passing rare,
And sing them to a lady fair.

VIII.

Four men-at arms came at their backs,
With halbert, bill, and battle-axe:
They bore lord Marmion's lance so strong,
And led his sumpter-mules along,
And ambling palfrey, when at need
Him listed ease his battle-steed.
The last, and trustiest of the four,
On high his forky pennon bore;
Like swallow's tail, in shape and hue,
Fluttered the streamer glossy blue,
Where, blazoned sable, as before,
The towering falcon seemed to soar.
Last, twenty yeomen, two and two,
In hosen black, and jerkins blue,
With falcons broidered on each breast,
Attended on their lord's behest.
Each, chosen for an archer good,
Knew hunting-craft by lake or wood;
Each one a six foot bow could bend,
And far a cloth-yard shaft could send;
Each held a boar-spear tough and strong,
And at their belts their quivers rung.
Their dusty palfreys, and array,
Showed they had marched a weary way.

IX.

'Tis meet that I should tell you now,
How fairly armed, and ordered how,
The soldiers of the guard,
With musquet, pike, and morion,
To welcome noble Marmion,
Stood in the castle-yard;
Minstrels and trumpeters were there,
The gunner held his linstock yare,
For welcome-shot prepared—
Entered the train, and such a clang,
As then through all his turrets rang,
Old Norham never heard.

X.

The guards their morrice-pikes advanced,
The trumpets flourished brave,
The cannon from the ramparts glanced,
And thundering welcome gave.
A blith salute, in martial sort,
The minstrels well might sound,
For, as lord Marmion crossed the court,
He scattered angels round.
"Welcome to Norham, Marmion,
Stout heart, and open hand!
Well dost thou brook thy gallant roan,
Thou flower of English land!"

* This word properly applies to a flight of water-fowl; but is applied, by analogy, to a body of horse.

There is a knight of the North Country,
Which leads a lusty *plump* of spears.
Battle of Flodden.

XI.

Two pursuivants, whom tabards deck,
With silver scutcheon round their neck,
Stood on the steps of stone,
By which you reach the donjon gate,
And there, with herald pomp and state,
They hailed lord Marmion:
They hailed him lord of Fontenaye,
Of Lutterward and Scrivelbaye,
Of Tamworth tower and town;[9]
And he, their courtesy to requite,
Gave them a chain of twelve marks weight,
All as he lighted down.
"Now, largesse,* largesse,[10] lord Marmion,
Knight of the crest of gold!
A blazoned shield, in battle won,
Ne'er guarded heart so bold."

XII.

They marshalled him to the castle-hall,
Where the guests stood all aside,
And loudly flourished the trumpet-call,
And the heralds loudly cried,
—"Room, lordings, room for lord Marmion,
With the crest and helm of gold!
Full well we know the trophies won
In the lists at Cottiswold:
There, vainly Ralph de Wilton strove
'Gainst Marmion's force to stand;
To him he lost his ladye-love,
And to the king his land.
Ourselves beheld the listed field,
A sight both sad and fair;
We saw lord Marmion pierce his shield,
And saw his saddle bare;
We saw the victor win the crest
He wears with worthy pride;
And on the gibbet tree, reversed,
His foeman's scutcheon tied.
Place, nobles, for the Falcon-knight!
Room, room, ye gentles gay,
For him who conquered in the right,
Marmion of Fontenaye!"—

XIII.

Then stepped to meet that noble lord,
Sir Hugh the Heron bold,
Baron of Twisell, and of Ford,
And captain of the Hold.[11]
He led lord Marmion to the deas,
Raised o'er the pavement high,
And placed him in the upper place—
They feasted full and high:
The whiles a northern harper rude
Chanted a rhyme of deadly feud,
"*How the fierce Thirlwalls, and Ridleys all,*[12]
Stout Willimondswick,
And Hard-riding Dick,
And Hughie of Hawden, and Will o' the Wall,
Have set on sir Albany Featherstonhaugh,
And taken his life at the Deadman's shaw."†—
Scantly lord Marmion's ear could brook
The harper's barbarous lay;
Yet much he praised the pains he took,
And well those pains did pay:
For lady's suit, and minstrel's strain,
By knight should ne'er be heard in vain.

XIV.

"Now, good lord Marmion," Heron says,
"Of your fair courtesy,
I pray you bide some little space
In this poor tower with me.
Here may you keep your arms from rust,
May breathe your war-horse well;
Seldom hath passed a week, but giust
Or feat of arms befel:
The Scots can rein a mettled steed,
And love to couch a spear;—
St. George! a stirring life they lead,
That have such neighbours near.
Then stay with us a little space,
Our northern wars to learn;
I pray you for your lady's grace."—
Lord Marmion's brow grew stern.

XV.

The captain marked his altered look,
And gave a squire the sign;
A mighty wassail bowl he took,
And crowned it high with wine.
"Now pledge me here, lord Marmion:
But first, I pray thee fair,
Where hast thou left that page of thine,
That used to serve thy cup of wine,
Whose beauty was so rare?
When last in Raby towers we met,
The boy I closely eyed,
And often marked his cheeks were wet
With tears he fain would hide:
His was no rugged horse-boy's hand,
To burnish shield, or sharpen brand,
Or saddle battle-steed;
But meeter seemed for lady fair,
To fan her cheeks, or curl her hair,
Or through embroidery, rich and rare,
The slender silk to lead:
His skin was fair, his ringlets gold,
His bosom—when he sighed,
The russet doublet's rugged fold
Could scarce repel its pride!
Say, hast thou given that lovely youth
To serve in lady's bower?
Or was the gentle page, in sooth,
A gentle paramour?"

XVI.

Lord Marmion ill could brook such jest;
He rolled his kindling eye,
With pain his rising wrath suppressed,
Yet made a calm reply:
"That boy thou thought'st so goodly fair,
He might not brook the northern air.
More of his fate if thou would'st learn,
I left him sick in Lindisfarn:
Enough of him.—But, Heron, say,
Why does thy lovely lady gay
Disdain to grace the hall to-day?
Or has that dame, so fair and sage,
Gone on some pious pilgrimage?"—
He spoke in covert scorn, for fame
Whispered light tales of Heron's dame.

XVII.

Unmarked, at leat unrecked, the taunt,
Careless the knight replied,
"No bird, whose feathers gayly flaunt,
Delights in cage to bide:
Norham is grim, and grated close,
Hemmed in by battlement and fosse,
And many a darksome tower;
And better loves my lady bright,
To sit in liberty and light,
In fair queen Margaret's bower.
We hold our greyhound in our hand,

* The cry by which the heralds expressed their thanks for the bounty of the nobles.

† The rest of this old ballad may be found in the note.

Our falcon on our glove;
But where shall we find leash or band,
For dame that loves to rove?
Let the wild falcon soar her swing,
She'll stoop when she has tired her wing."—

XVIII.

"Nay, if with royal James's bride,
The lovely lady Heron bide,
Behold me here a messenger,
Your tender greetings prompt to bear;
For, to the Scottish court addressed,
I journey at our king's behest,
And pray you, of your grace, provide
For me, and mine, a trusty guide.
I have not ridden in Scotland since
James backed the cause of that mock prince,
Warbeck, that Flemish counterfeit,
Who on the gibbet paid the cheat.
Then did I march with Surrey's power
What time we razed old Ayton tower."—[13]

XIX

"For such like need, my lord, I trow,
Norham can find you guides enow;
For here be some have pricked as far,
On Scottish ground, as to Dunbar;
Have drunk the monks of St. Bothan's ale,
And driven the beeves of Lauderdale;
Harried the wives of Greenlaw's goods,
And given them light to set their hoods."—[14]

XX

"Now, in good sooth," lord Marmion cried,
"Were I in warlike-wise to ride,
A better guard I would not lack,
Than your stout forayers at my back:
But, as in form of peace I go,
A friendly messenger, to know,
Why, through all Scotland, near and far,
Their king is mustering troops for war,
The sight of plundering border spears
Might justify suspicious fears,
And deadly feud, or thirst of spoil,
Break out in some unseemly broil:
A herald were my fitting guide;
Or friar, sworn in peace to bide;
Or pardoner, or travelling priest,
Or strolling pilgrim, at the least."

XXI.

The captain mused a little space,
And passed his hand across his face.
—"Fain would I find the guide you want,
But ill may spare a pursuivant,
The only men that safe can ride
Mine errands on the Scottish side:
And, though a bishop built this fort,
Few holy brethren here resort;
Even our good chaplain, as I ween,
Since our last siege, we have not seen:
The mass he might not sing or say,
Upon one stinted meal a day;
So, safe he sat in Durham aisle,
And prayed for our success the while.
Our Norham vicar, wo betide,
Is all too well in case to ride.
The priest of Shoreswood[15]—he could rein
The wildest war-horse in your train;
But then, no spearman in the hall
Will sooner swear, or stab, or brawl.
Friar John of Tillmouth were the man;
A blithsome brother at the can,
A welcome guest in hall and bower,
He knows each castle, town, and tower,
In which the wine and ale are good
'Twixt Newcastle and Holy-Rood.
But that good man, as ill befalls,
Hath seldom left our castle walls,
Since, on the vigil of St. Bede,
In evil hour, he crossed the Tweed,
To teach dame Alison her creed.
Old Bughtrig found him with his wife;
And John, an enemy to strife,
Sans frock and hood, fled for his life.
The jealous churl hath deeply swore,
That, if again he venture o'er,
He shall shrieve penitent no more.
Little he loves such risks, I know;
Yet, in your guard, perchance, will go."—

XXII.

Young Selby, at the fair hall-board,
Carved to his uncle, and that lord,
And reverently took up the word.
"Kind uncle, wo were we each one,
If harm should hap to brother John.
He is a man of mirthful speech,
Can many a game and gambol teach;
Full well at tables can he play,
And sweep, at bowls, the stake away.
None can a lustier carol bawl,
The needfullest among us all,
When time hangs heavy in the hall,
And snow comes thick at Christmas tide,
And we can neither hunt, nor ride
A foray on the Scottish side.
The vowed revenge of Bughtrig rude,
May end in worse than loss of hood.
Let friar John, in safety, still
In chimney-corner snore his fill,
Roast hissing crabs, or flagons swill:
Last night, to Norham there came one
Will better guide lord Marmion."
"Nephew," quoth Heron, "by my fay,
Well hast thou spoke; say forth thy say."

XXIII.

"Here is a holy palmer come,
From Salem first, and last from Rome;
One, that hath kissed the blessed tomb,
And visited each holy shrine,
In Araby and Palestine;
On hills of Armenie hath been,
Where Noah's ark may yet be seen;
By that Red Sea, too, hath he trod,
Which parted at the prophet's rod;
In Sinai's wilderness he saw
The Mount, where Israel heard the law,
Mid thunder-dint, and flashing levin,
And shadows, mists, and darkness, given.
He shows saint James's cockle shell,
Of fair Montserrat, too, can tell;
And of that Grot where Olives nod,
Where, darling of each heart and eye,
From all the youth of Sicily,
Saint Rosalie retired to God.[16]

XXIV.

"To stout saint George of Norwich merry,
Saint Thomas, too, of Canterbury,
Cuthbert of Durham, and saint Bede,
For his sins' pardon hath he prayed.
He knows the passes of the North,
And seeks far shrines beyond the Forth;
Little he eats, and long will wake,
And drinks but of the streams or lake.
This were a guide o'er moor and dale;
But, when our John hath quaffed his ale,

As little as the wind that blows,
And warms itself against his nose,
Kens he, or cares, which way he goes."—

XXV.

" Gramercy!" quoth lord Marmion,
" Full loth were I, that friar John,
That venerable man, for me,
Were placed in fear or jeopardy:
If this same palmer will me lead
From hence to Holy-Rood,
Like his good saint, I'll pay his meed,
Instead of cockle shell or bead,
With angels fair and good.
I love such holy ramblers; still
They know to charm a weary hill,
With song, romance, or lay:
Some jovial tale, or glee, or jest,
Some lying legend, at the least,
They bring to cheer the way."—

XXVI.

" Ah! noble sir, young Selby said,
And finger on his lip he laid,
" This man knows much, perchance e'en more
Than he could learn by holy lore.
Still to himself he's muttering,
And shrinks, as at some unseen thing.
Last night we listened at his cell;
Strange sounds we heard, and, sooth to tell,
He murmured on till morn, howe'er
No living mortal could be near.
Sometimes I thought I heard it plain,
As other voices spoke again.
I cannot tell—I like it not—
Friar John hath told us it is wrote,
No conscience clear, and void of wrong,
Can rest awake, and pray so long.
Himself still sleeps before his beads
Have marked ten aves, and two creeds."—[17]

XXVII.

—" Let pass," quoth Marmion; " by my fay,
This man shall guide me on my way,
Although the great arch fiend and he
Had sworn themselves of company;
So please you, gentle youth, to call
This palmer to the castle hall."
The summoned palmer came in place;
His sable cowl o'erhung his face:
In his black mantle was he clad,
With Peter's keys, in cloth of red,
On his broad shoulders wrought;[18]
The scallop shell his cap did deck;
The crucifix around his neck
Was from Loretto brought;
His sandals were with travel tore,
Staff, budget, bottle, scrip, he wore:
The faded palm-branch in his hand,
Showed pilgrim from the Holy Land.

XXVIII.

When as the palmer came in hall,
Nor lord, nor knight, was there more tall,
Or had a statelier step withal,
Or looked more high and keen:
For no saluting did he wait,
But strode across the hall of state,
And fronted Marmion where he sate,
As he his peer had been.
But his gaunt frame was worn with toil;
His cheek was sunk, alas, the while!
And when he struggled at a smile,
His eye looked haggard wild:
Poor wretch! the mother that him bare,
If she had been in presence there,
In his wan face, and sun-burned hair,
She had not known her child.
Danger, long travel, want, or wo,
Soon change the form that best we know—
For deadly fear can time outgo,
And blanch at once the hair;
Hard toil can roughen form and face,
And want can quench the eye's bright grace;
Nor does old age a wrinkle trace,
More deeply than despair.
Happy whom none of these befall,
But this poor palmer knew them all.

XXIX.

Lord Marmion then his boon did ask;
The palmer took on him the task,
So he would march with morning tide,
To Scottish court to be his guide.
—" But I have solemn vows to pay,
And may not linger by the way,
To fair Saint Andrews bound,
Within the ocean-cave to pray,
Where good saint Rule his holy lay,
From midnight to the dawn of day,
Sung to the billows' sound;[19]
Thence to saint Fillan's blessed well,
Whose spring can frenzied dreams dispel,
And the crazed brain restore:—[20]
Saint Mary grant, that cave or spring
Could back to peace my bosom bring,
Or bid it throb no more!"—

XXX.

And now the midnight draught of sleep,
Where wine and spices richly steep,
In massive bowl of silver deep,
The page presents on knee.
Lord Marmion drank a fair good rest,
The captain pledged his noble guest,
The cup went through among the rest,
Who drained it merrily:
Alone the palmer passed it by,
Though Selby pressed him courteously.
This was the sign the feast was o'er:
It hushed the merry wassel-roar,
The minstrels ceased to sound.
Soon in the castle nought was heard,
But the slow footstep of the guard,
Pacing his sober round.

XXXI.

With early dawn lord Marmion rose:
And first the chapel doors unclose;
Then, after morning rites were done,
(A hasty mass from friar John,)
And knight and squire had broke their fast,
On rich substantial repast,
Lord Marmion's bugles blew to horse:
Then came the stirrup-cup in course,
Between the baron and his host,
No point of courtesy was lost;
High thanks were by lord Marmion paid,
Solemn excuse the captain made,
Till, filing from the gate, had past
That noble train, their lord the last.
Then loudly rung the trumpet-call:
Thundered the cannon from the wall,
And shook the Scottish shore;
Around the castle eddied slow,
Volumes of smoke as white as snow,
And hid its turrets hoar;

Till they rolled forth upon the air,
And met the river breezes there,
Which gave again the prospect fair.

INTRODUCTION TO CANTO II.

TO THE REV. JOHN MARRIOT, M. A.

Ashestiel, Ettrick Forest.

The scenes are desert now, and bare,
Where flourished once a forest fair,[1]
When these waste glens with copse were lined,
And peopled with the hart and hind.
Yon thorn—perchance whose prickly spears
Have fenced him for three hundred years,
While fell around his green compeers—
Yon lonely thorn, would he could tell
The changes of his parent dell,
Since he, so gray and stubborn now,
Waved in each breeze a sappling bough;
Would he could tell how deep the shade,
A thousand mingled branches made;
How broad the shadows of the oak,
How clung the rowan* to the rock,
And through the foliage showed his head,
With narrow leaves, and berries red;
What pines on every mountain sprung,
O'er every dell what birches hung,
In every breeze what aspens shook,
What alders shaded every brook!
"Here, in my shade," methinks he'd say,
"The mighty stag at noontide lay;
The wolf I've seen, a fiercer game,
(The neighbouring dingle bears his name,)
With lurching step around me prowl,
And stop against the moon to howl;
The mountain-boar, on battle set,
His tusks upon my stem would whet;
While doe and roe, and red-deer good,
Have bounded by through gay green-wood.
Then oft, from Newark's riven tower,
Sallied a Scottish monarch's power:
A thousand vassals mustered round,
With horse, and hawk, and horn, and hound;
And I might see the youth intent,
Guard every pass with cross-bow bent;
And through the brake the rangers stalk,
And falc'ners hold the ready hawk;
And foresters, in green-wood trim,
Lead in the leash the gaze-hounds grim,
Attentive, as the bratchet's† bay
From the dark covert drove the prey,
To slip them as he broke away.
The startled quarry bounds amain,
As fast the gallant grey-hounds strain:
Whistles the arrow from the bow,
Answers the harquebuss below;
While all the rocking hills reply,
To hoof-clang, hound, and hunters' cry,
And bugles ringing lightsomely."—
Of such proud huntings, many tales
Yet linger in our lonely dales,
Up pathless Ettrick, and on Yarrow,
Where erst the Outlaw drew his arrow.[2]
But not more blith that sylvan court,
Than we have been at humbler sport;
Though small our pomp and mean our game,
Our mirth, dear Marriot, was the same.
Remember'st thou my grey-hounds true?
O'er holt, or hill, there never flew,
From slip, or leash, there never sprang,
More fleet of foot, or sure of fang.
Nor dull, between each merry chase,
Passed by the intermitted space;
For we had fair resource in store,
In Classic, and in Gothic lore:
We marked each memorable scene,
And held poetic talk between;
Nor hill, nor brook, we paced along,
But had its legend or its song.
All silent now—for now are still
Thy bowers, untenanted Bowhill!
No longer, from thy mountains dun,
The yeoman hears the well-known gun,
And, while his honest heart glows warm,
At thought of his paternal farm,
Round to his mates a brimmer fills,
And drinks, "The chieftain of the hills!"
No fairy forms, in Yarrow's bowers,
Trip o'er the walks, or tend the flowers,
Fair as the elves whom Janet saw,
By moonlight, dance on Carterhaugh;
No youthful baron's left to grace
The forest-sheriff's lonely chase,
And ape, in manly step and tone,
The majesty of Oberon:
And she is gone, whose lovely face
Is but her least and lowest grace;
Though if to Sylphid queen 'twere given,
To show our earth the charms of heaven,
She could not glide along the air,
With form more light, or face more fair.
No more the widow's deafened ear
Grows quick, that lady's step to hear:
At noontide she expects her not,
Nor busies her to trim the cot;
Pensive she turns her humming wheel,
Or pensive cooks her orphans' meal;
Yet blesses, ere she deals their bread,
The gentle hand by which they're fed.
From Yair—which hills so closely bind,
Scarce can the Tweed his passage find,
Though much he fret, and chafe, and toil,
Till all his eddying currents boil,—
Her long-descended lord is gone,
And left us by the stream alone.
And much I miss those sportive boys,
Companions of my mountain joys,
Just at the age 'twixt boy and youth,
When thought is speech, and speech is truth.
Close to my side with what delight,
They pressed to hear of Wallace wight,
When, pointing to his airy mound,
I called his ramparts holy ground![*]
Kindled their brows to hear me speak;
And I have smiled, to feel my cheek,
Despite the difference of our years,
Return again the glow of theirs.
Ah, happy boys! such feelings pure,
They will not, cannot long endure;
Condemned to stem the world's rude tide,
You may not linger by the side;
For fate shall thrust you from the shore,
And passion ply the sail and oar.
Yet cherish the remembrance still,
Of the lone mountain, and the rill;
For trust, dear boys, the time will come,
When fiercer transports shall be dumb,
And you will think, right frequently,
But, well I hope, without a sigh,

* Mountain-ash. † Slow-hound.

* There is on a high mountainous range above the farm of Ashestiel, a fosse called Wallace's Trench.

On the free hours that we have spent,
Together, on the brown hill's bent.
When, musing on companions gone,
We doubly feel ourselves alone,
Something, my friend, we yet may gain,—
There is a pleasure in this pain:
It sooths the love of lonely rest,
Deep in each gentler heart impressed.
'Tis silent, amid worldly toils,
And stifled soon by mental broils;
But, in a bosom thus prepared,
Its still small voice is often heard,
Whispering a mingled sentiment,
Twixt resignation and content.
Oft in my mind such thoughts awake,
By lone St. Mary's silent lake:[3]
Thou know'st it well,—nor fen, nor sedge,
Pollute the pure lake's crystal edge;
Abrupt and sheer, the mountains sink
At once upon the level brink;
And just a trace of silver sand
Marks where the water meets the land.
Far in the mirror, bright and blue,
Each hill's huge outline you may view;
Shaggy with heath, but lonely bare,
Nor tree, nor bush, nor brake is there,
Save where, of land, yon slender line
Bears thwart the lake the scattered pine.
Yet e'en this nakedness has power,
And aids the feeling of the hour;
Nor thicket, dell, nor copse you spy,
Where living thing concealed might lie;
Nor point, retiring, hides a dell,
Where swain, or woodman lone, might dwell;
There's nothing left to fancy's guess,
You see that all is loneliness:
And silence aids—though the steep hills
Send to the lake a thousand rills;
In summer tide, so soft they weep,
The sound but lulls the ear asleep;
Your horse's hoof-tread sounds too rude,
So stilly is the solitude.
Nought living meets the eye or ear,
But well I ween the dead are near;
For though, in feudal strife, a foe
Hath laid Our Lady's chapel low,[4]
Yet still, beneath the hallowed soil,
The peasant rests him from his toil,
And, dying, bids his bones be laid,
Where erst his simple fathers prayed.
If age had tamed the passions' strife,
And fate had cut my ties to life,
Here, have I thought, 'twere sweet to dwell,
And rear again the chaplain's cell,
Like that same peaceful hermitage,
Where Milton longed to spend his age.
'Twere sweet to mark the setting day
On Bourhope's lonely top decay;
And, as it faint and feeble died,
On the broad lake, and mountain's side,
To say, "Thus pleasures fade away;
Youth, talents, beauty, thus decay,
And leave us dark, forlorn, and gray!"—
Then gaze on Dryhope's ruined tower,
And think on Yarrow's faded Flower:
And when that mountain-sound I heard,
Which bids us be for storm prepared,
The distant rustling of his wings,
As up his force the tempest brings,
'Twere sweet, ere yet his terrors rave,
To sit upon the wizard's grave;
That wizard priest's, whose bones are thrust
From company of holy dust;[5]
On which no sunbeam ever shines—
(So superstition's creed divines,)
Thence view the lake, with sullen roar,
Heave her broad billows to the shore;
And mark the wild swans mount the gale,
Spread wide through mist their snowy sail,
And ever stoop again, to lave
Their bosoms on the surging wave;
Then, when against the driving hail,
No longer might my plaid avail,
Back to my lonely home retire,
And light my lamp, and trim my fire:
There ponder o'er some mystic lay,
Till the wild tale had all its sway,
And, in the bittern's distant shriek,
I heard unearthly voices speak,
And thought the wizard priest was come,
To claim again his ancient home!
And bade my busy fancy range
To frame him fitting shape and strange,
Till from the task my brow I cleared,
And smiled to think that I had feared.
But chief, 'twere sweet to think such life,
(Though but escape from fortune's strife,)
Something most matchless, good, and wise,
A great and grateful sacrifice;
And deem each hour, to musing given,
A step upon the road to heaven.
Yet him, whose heart is ill at ease
Such peaceful solitudes displease:
He loves to drown his bosom's jar
Amid the elemental war:
And my black palmer's choice had been
Some ruder and more savage scene,
Like that which frowns round dark Lochskene.[6]
There eagles scream from isle to shore;
Down all the rocks the torrents roar;
O'er the black waves incessant driven,
Dark mists infect the summer heaven;
Through the rude barriers of the lake,
Away its hurrying waters break,
Faster and whiter dash and curl,
Till down yon dark abyss they hurl.
Rises the fog-smoke white as snow,
Thunders the viewless stream below,
Diving, as if condemned to lave
Some demon's subterranean cave,
Who, prisoned by enchanter's spell,
Shakes the dark rock with groan and yell.
And well that palmer's form and mien
Had suited with the stormy scene,
Just on the edge, straining his ken,
To view the bottom of the den,
Where, deep, deep down, and far within,
Toils with the rocks the roaring linn:
Then, issuing forth one foamy wave,
And wheeling round the Giant's Grave,
White as the snowy charger's tail,
Drives down the pass of Moffatdale.
Marriot, thy harp, on Isis strung,
To many a Border theme has rung:
Then list to me, and thou shalt know
Of this mysterious man of wo.

CANTO II.

THE CONVENT.

I.

The breeze, which swept away the smoke,
Round Norham Castle rolled,
When all the loud artillery spoke,

With lightning-flash, and thunder-stroke,
As Marmion left the Hold.
It curled not Tweed alone, that breeze,
For, far upon Northumbrian seas,
It freshly blew, and strong,
Where, from high Whitby's cloistered pile,
Bound to saint Cuthbert's Holy Isle,[7]
It bore a bark along.
Upon the gale she stooped her side,
And bounded o'er the swelling tide,
As she were dancing home;
The merry seamen laughed, to see
Their gallant ship so lustily
Furrow the green sea-foam.
Much joyed they in their honoured freight;
For, on the deck, in chair of state,
The abbess of saint Hilda placed,
With five fair nuns, the galley graced.

II.

'Twas sweet to see these holy maids,
Like birds escaped to green wood shades,
Their first flight from the cage,
How timid, and how curious too,
For all to them was strange and new,
And all the common sights they view,
Their wonderment engage.
One eyed the shrouds and swelling sail,
With many a benedicite;
One at the rippling surge grew pale,
And would for terror pray;
Then shrieked, because the sea-dog, nigh,
His round black head, and sparkling eye,
Reared o'er the foaming spray;
And one would still adjust her veil,
Disordered by the summer gale,
Perchance lest some more worldly eye
Her dedicated charms might spy;
Perchance, because such action graced
Her fair turned arm and slender waist.
Light was each simple bosom there,
Save two, who ill might pleasure share,—
The abbess, and the novice Clare.

III.

The abbess was of noble blood,
But early took the veil and hood,
Ere upon life she cast a look,
Or knew the world that she forsook.
Fair too she was, and kind had been
As she was fair, but ne'er had seen
For her a timid lover sigh,
Nor knew the influence of her eye.
Love, to her ear, was but a name,
Combined with vanity and shame;
Her hopes, her fears, her joys, were all
Bounded within the cloister wall:
The deadliest sin her mind could reach,
Was of monastic rule the breach;
And her ambition's highest aim,
To emulate saint Hilda's fame.
For this she gave her ample dower,
To raise the convent's eastern tower;
For this, with carving rare and quaint,
She decked the chapel of the saint;
And gave the relique-shrine of cost,
With ivory and gems embost.
The poor her convent's bounty blest,
The pilgrim in its halls found rest.

IV.

Black was her garb, her rigid rule
Reformed on Benedictine school;
Her cheek was pale, her form was spare:
Vigils, and penitence austere
Had early quenched the light of youth,
But gentle was the dame in sooth;
Though, vain of her religious sway,
She loved to see her maids obey,
Yet nothing stern was she in cell,
And the nuns loved their abbess well.
Sad was this voyage to the dame;
Summoned to Lindisfarn, she came,
There, with saint Cuthbert's abbot old,
And Tynemouth's prioress, to hold
A chapter of saint Benedict,
For inquisition stern and strict,
On two apostates from the faith,
And, if need were, to doom to death.

V.

Nought say I here of sister Clare,
Save this, that she was young and fair;
As yet a novice unprofessed,
Lovely and gentle, but distressed.
She was betrothed to one now dead,
Or worse, who had dishonoured fled.
Her kinsman bade her give her hand
To one, who loved her for her land;
Herself, almost heart-broken now,
Was bent to take the vestal vow,
And shroud, within saint Hilda's gloom,
Her blasted hopes and withered bloom.

VI.

She sate upon the galley's prow,
And seemed to mark the waves below;
Nay, seemed so fixed her look and eye,
To count them as they glided by.
She saw them not—'twas seeming all—
Far other scene her thoughts reveal,—
A sun-scorched desert, waste and bare,
Nor wave nor breezes, murmured there;
There saw she, where some careless hand
O'er a dead corpse had heaped the sand,
To hide it till the jackalls come,
To tear it from the scanty tomb.—
See what a woful look was given,
As she raised up her eyes to heaven!

VII.

Lovely, and gentle, and distressed—
These charms might tame the fiereest breast:
Harpers have sung, and poets told,
That he, in fury uncontrolled,
The shaggy monarch of the wood,
Before a virgin, fair and good,
Hath pacified his savage mood.
But passions in the human frame,
Oft put the lion's rage to shame;
And jealousy, by dark intrigue,
With sorded avarice in league,
Had practised, with her bowl and knife,
Against the mourner's harmless life.
This crime was charged 'gainst those who lay
Prisoned in Cuthbert's islet gray.

VIII.

And now the vessel skirts the strand
Of mountainous Northumberland;
Towns, towers, and halls successive rise,
And catch the nuns' delighted eyes.
Monk Wearmouth soon behind them lay,
And Tynemouth's priory and bay;
They marked, amid her trees, the hall
Of Lofty Seaton-Delaval;
They saw the Blythe and Wansbeck floods
Rush to the sea through sounding woods;

They past the tower of Widderington,
Mother of many a valiant son;
At Coquet-isle their beads they tell
To the good saint who owned the cell;
Then did the Alne attention claim,
And Warkworth, proud of Percy's name;
And next, they crossed themselves, to hear
The whitening breakers sound so near,
Where, boiling through the rocks, they roar
On Dunstanborough's caverned shore:
Thy tow'r, proud Bamborough, mark'd they there;
King Ida's castle, huge and square,
From its tall rock look grimly down,
And on the swelling ocean frown;
Then from the coast they bore away,
And reached the Holy Island's bay.

IX.

The tide did now its flood-mark gain,
And girdled in the saint's domain:
For, with the flow and ebb, the style
Varies from continent to isle;
Dry-shod, o'er sands, twice every day,
The pilgrims to the shrine find way;
Twice every day, the waves efface
Of staves and sandall'd feet the trace.
As to the port the galley flew,
Higher and higher rose to view
The castle, with its battled wall,
The ancient monastery's hall,
A solemn, huge, and dak-red pile,
Placed on the margin of the isle.

X.

In Saxon strength that abbey frowned,
With massive arches broad and round,
That rose alternate, row and row,
On ponderous columns, short and low,
Built ere the art was known,
By pointed aisle, and shafted stalk,
The arcades of an alleyed walk
To emulate in stone.
On the deep walls, the heathen Dane
Had poured his impious rage in vain;
And needful was such strength to these,
Exposed to the tempestuous seas,
Scourged by the wind's eternal sway,
Open to rovers fierce as they,
Which could twelve hundred years withstand
Winds, waves, and northern pirates' hand.
Not but that portions of the pile,
Rebuilded in a later style,
Showed where the spoiler's hand had been;
Not but the wasting sea-breeze keen
Had worn the pillar's carving quaint,
And mouldered in his niche the saint,
And rounded, with consuming power,
The pointed angles of each tower:
Yet still entire the abbey stood,
Like veteran, worn, but unsubdued.

XI.

Soon as they neared his turrets strong,
The maidens raised Saint Hilda's song,
And with the sea-wave and the wind,
Their voices, sweetly shrill, combined,
And made harmonious close;
Then, answering from the sandy shore,
Half-drowned amid the breakers' roar,
According chorus rose.
Down to the haven of the Isle,
The monks and nuns in order file,
From Cuthbert's cloisters grim;
Banner, and cross, and reliques there,
To meet saint Hilda's maids, they bare;
And, as they caught the sounds on air,
They echoed back the hymn.
The islanders, in joyous mood,
Rushed emulously through the flood,
To hale the bark to land;
Conspicuous by her veil and hood,
Signing the cross the abbess stood,
And blessed them with her hand.

XII.

Suppose we now the welcome said,
Suppose the convent banquet made;
All through the holy dome,
Through cloister, aisle, and gallery,
Wherever vestal maid might pry,
Nor risk to meet unhallowed eye,
The stranger sisters roam;
Till fell the evening damp with dew,
And the sharp sea-breeze coldly blew,
For there, e'en summer night is chill.
Then, having strayed and gazed their fill,
They closed around the fire;
And all, in turn, essayed to paint
The rival merits of their saint,
A theme that ne'er can tire
A holy maid; for, be it known,
That their saint's honour is their own.

XIII.

Then Whitby's nuns exulting told,
How to their house three barons bold
Must menial service do;[8]
While horns blow out a note of shame,
And monks cry, "Fy upon your name!
In wrath, for loss of sylvan game,
Saint Hilda's priest ye slew."
"This, on Ascension-day, each year,
While labouring on our harbour-pier,
Must Herbert, Bruce, and Percy hear."
They told how, in their convent cell,
A saxon princess once did dwell,
The lovely Edelfled;[9]
And how, of thousand snakes, each one
Was changed into a coil of stone,
When holy Hilda prayed.
Themselves, within their holy bound,
Their stony folds had often found.
They told, how sea-fowls' pinions fail,
As over Whitby's towers they sail,[10]
And, sinking down, with flutterings faint,
They do their homage to the saint.

XIV.

Nor did saint Cuthbert's daughters fail
To vie with these in holy tale;
His body's resting-place, of old,
How oft their patron changed, they told;[11]
How, when the rude Dane burned their pile,
The monks fled forth from Holy Isle;
O'er northern mountain, marsh, and moor,
From sea to sea, from shore to shore,
Seven years saint Cuthbert's corpse they bore.
They rested them in fair Melrose;
But though, alive, he loved it well,
Not there his relics might repose;
For, wondrous tale to tell!
In his stone-coffin forth he rides,
(A ponderous bark for river tides,)
Yet light as gossamer it glides,
Downward to Tillmouth cell.
Nor long was his abiding there,
For southward did the saint repair;

Chester-le Street, and Rippon, saw
His holy corpse, ere Wardilaw
Hailed him with joy and fear;
And, after many wanderings past,
He chose his lordly seat at last,
Where his cathedral, huge and vast,
Looks down upon the Wear.
There, deep in Durham's Gothic shade,
His relics are in secret laid;
But none may know the place,
Save of his holiest servants three,
Deep sworn to solemn secrecy,
Who share that wondrous grace.

XV.

Who may his miracles declare!
E'en Scotland's dauntless king, and heir
(Although with them they led
Galwegians, wild as ocean's gale,
And Lodon's knights, all sheathed in mail,
And the bold men of Teviotdale,)
Before his standard fled.[12]
'Twas he, to vindicate his reign,
Edged Alfred's falchion on the Dane,
And turned the conqueror back again,[13]
When, with his Norman bowyer band,
He came to waste Northumberland.

XVI.

But fain saint Hilda's nuns would learn,
If, on a rock, by Lindisfarn,
Saint Cuthbert sits, and toils to frame
The sea-born beads that bear his name:[14]
Such tales had Whitby's fishers told,
And said they might his shape behold,
And hear his anvil sound;
A deadened clang,—a huge dim form,
Seen but, and heard, when gathering storm,
And night were closing round.
But this, as tale of idle fame,
The nuns of Lindisfarn disclaim.

XVII.

While round the fire such legends go,
Far different was the scene of wo,
Where, in a secret aisle beneath,
Council was held of life and death.
It was more dark and lone, that vault,
Than the worst dungeon cell;
Old Colwulf[15] built it, for his fault,
In penitence to dwell,
When he, for cowl and beads, laid down
The Saxon battle-axe and crown.
This den, which, chilling every sense
Of feeling, hearing, sight,
Was called the vault of penitence,
Excluding air and light,
Was, by the prelate Sexhelm, made
A place of burial, for such dead
As, having died in mortal sin,
Might not be laid the church within.
'Twas now a place of punishment;
Whence, if so loud a shriek were sent,
As reached the upper air,
The hearers blessed themselves, and said,
The spirits of the sinful dead
Bemoaned their torments there.

XVIII.

But though, in the monastic pile,
Did of this penitential aisle
Some vague tradition go,
Few only, save the abbot, knew
Where the place lay; and still more few
Were those, who had from him the clew
To that dread vault to go.
Victim and executioner
Were blind-fold when transported there.
In low dark rounds the arches hung,
From the rude rock the side-walls sprung;
The grave-stones, rudely sculptured o'er,
Half sunk in earth, by time half wore,
Were all the pavement of the floor;
The mildew drops fell one by one,
With tinkling plash, upon the stone.
A cresset,* in an iron chain,
Which served to light this drear domain,
With damp and darkness seemed to strive,
As if it scarce might keep alive;
And yet it dimly served to show
The awful conclave met below.

XIX.

There, met to doom in secrecy,
Were placed the heads of convents three;
All servants of saint Benedict,
The statutes of whose orders strict
On iron table lay;
In long black dress, on seats of stone,
Behind were these three judges shown,
By the pale cresset's ray:
The abbess of saint Hilda, there,
Sate for a space with visage bare,
Until, to hide her bosom's swell,
And tear-drops that for pity fell,
She closely drew her veil:
Von shrouded figure, as I guess,
By her proud mien and flowing dress,
Is Tynemouth's haughty prioress,[16]
And she with awe looks pale:
And he, that ancient man, whose sight
Has long been quenched by age's night,
Upon whose wrinkled brow alone,
Nor ruth, nor mercy's trace is shown,
Whose look is hard and stern,—
Saint Cuthbert's abbot is his style;
For sanctity called, through the isle,
The saint of Lindisfarn.

XX.

Before them stood a guilty pair;
But, though an equal fate they share,
Yet one alone deserves our care.
Her sex a page's dress belied;
The cloke and doublet, loosely tied,
Obscured her charms, but could not hide.
Her cap down o'er her face she drew;
And, on her doublet-breast,
She tried to hide the badge of blue,
Lord Marmion's falcon crest.
But, at the prioress' command,
A monk undid the silken band,
That tied her tresses fair,
And raised the bonnet from her head,
And down her slender form they spread,
In ringlets rich and rare.
Constance de Beverley they know,
Sister professed of Fontevraud,
Whom the church numbered with the dead,
For broken vows, and convent fled.

XXI.

When thus her face was given to view,
(Although so pallid was her hue,
It did a ghastly contrast bear,
To those bright ringlets, glistering fair,)
Her look composed, and steady eye,
Bespoke a matchless constancy.

* Antique chandelier.

And there she stood, so calm, and pale,
That, but her breathing did not fail,
And motion slight of eye and head,
And of her bosom, warranted,
That neither sense nor pulse she lacks,
You might have thought a form of wax,
Wrought to the very life, was there;
So still she was, so pale, so fair.

XXII.

Her comrade was a sordid soul,
Such as does murder for a meed;
Who, but of fear, knows no control,
Because his conscience, seared and foul,
Feels not the import of his deed;
One, whose brute-feeling ne'er aspires
Beyond his own more brute desires.
Such tools the tempter ever needs,
To do the savagest of deeds;
For them, no visioned terrors daunt,
Their nights no fancied spectres haunt;
One fear with them, of all most base,
The fear of death,—alone finds place.
This wretch was clad in frock and cowl,
And shamed not loud to moan and howl,
His body on the floor to dash,
And crouch, like hound beneath the lash;
While his mute partner, standing near,
Waited her doom without a tear.

XXIII.

Yet well the luckless wretch might shriek,
Well might her paleness terror speak,
For there were seen, in that dark wall,
Two niches, narrow, deep, and tall;—
Who enters at such grisely door,
Shall ne'er, I ween, find exit more.
In each a slender meal was laid,
Of roots, of water, and of bread:
By each, in Benedictine dress,
Two haggard monks stood motionless;
Who, holding high a blazing torch,
Showed the grim entrance of the porch:
Reflecting back the smoky beam,
The dark-red walls and arches gleam.
Hewn stones and cement were displayed,
And building tools in order laid.

XXIV.

These executioners were chose,
As men who were with mankind foes.
And, with despite and envy fired,
Into the cloister had retired;
Or who, in desperate doubt of grace,
Strove, by deep penance, to efface
Of some foul crime the stain;
For, as the vassals of her will,
Such men the church selected still,
As either joyed in doing ill,
Or thought more grace to gain,
If, in her cause, they wrestled down
Feelings their nature strove to own.
By strange device were they brought there,
They knew not how, and knew not where.

XXV.

And now that blind old abbot rose,
To speak the chapter's doom,
On those the wall was to enclose,
Alive, within the tomb;[17]
But stopped, because that woful maid,
Gathering her powers, to speak essayed.
Twice she essayed, and twice, in vain;
Her accents might no utterance gain;
Nought but imperfect murmurs slip
From her convulsed and quivering lip:
'Twixt each attempt all was so still,
You seemed to hear a distant rill—
'Twas ocean's swells and falls;
For though this vault of sin and fear
Was to the sounding surge so near,
A tempest there you scarce could hear;
So massive were the walls.

XXVI.

At length, an effort sent apart
The blood that curdled to her heart,
And light came to her eye,
And colour dawned upon her cheek,
A hectic and a fluttered streak,
Like that left on the Cheviot peak,
By Autumn's stormy sky;
And when her silence broke at length,
Still as she spoke, she gathered strength,
And armed herself to bear;
It was a fearful sight to see
Such high resolve and constancy,
In form so soft and fair.

XXVII.

"I speak not to implore your grace;
Well know I, for one minute's space
Successless might I sue:
Nor do I speak your prayers to gain;
For if a death of lingering pain,
To cleanse my sins, be penance vain,
Vain are your masses too.—
I listened to a traitor's tale,
I left the convent and the veil,
For three long years I bowed my pride,
A horse-boy in his train to ride;
And well my folly's meed he gave,
Who forfeited, to be his slave,
All here, and all beyond the grave.—
He saw young Clara's face more fair,
He knew her of broad lands the heir,
Forgot his vows, his faith forswore,
And Constance was beloved no more.
'Tis an old tale, and often told;
But, did my fate and wish agree,
Ne'er had been read, in story old,
Of maiden true betrayed for gold,
That loved, or was avenged, like me!

XXVIII.

"The king approved his favourite's aim;
In vain a rival barred his claim,
Whose faith with Clare's was plight,
For he attaints that rival's fame
With treason's charge—and on they came,
In mortal lists to fight.
Their oaths are said,
Their prayers are prayed,
Their lances in the rest are laid,
They meet in mortal shock;
And hark! the throng, with thundering cry
Shout 'Marmion, Marmion, to the sky!
De Wilton to the block!'
Say ye, who preach heaven shall decide,
When in the lists two champions ride,
Say, was heaven's justice here?
When, loyal in his love and faith,
Wilton found overthrow or death,
Beneath a traitor's spear.
How false the charge, how true he fell,
This guilty packet best can tell."—
Then drew a packet from her breast,
Paused, gathered voice, and spoke the rest.

XXIX.

"Still was false Marmion's bridal staid;
To Whitby's convent fled the maid,
The hated match to shun.
'Ho! shifts she thus?' king Henry cried,
Sir Marmion, she shall be thy bride,
If she were sworn a nun.'
One way remained—the king's command
Sent Marmion to the Scottish land:
I lingered here, and rescue plann'd
For Clara and for me:
This caitiff monk, for gold, did swear,
He would to Whitby's shrine repair,
And, by his drugs, my rival fair
A saint in heaven should be.
But ill the dastard kept his oath,
Whose cowardice has undone us both.

XXX.

"And now my tongue the secret tells,
Not that remorse my bosom swells,
But to assure my soul, that none
Shall ever wed with Marmion.
Had fortune my last hope betrayed,
This packet, to the king conveyed,
Had given him to the headsman's stroke,
Although my heart that instant broke.—
Now, men of death, work forth your will,
For I can suffer, and be still;
And, come he slow, or come he fast,
It is but Death who comes at last.

XXXI.

"Yet dread me, from my living tomb,
Ye vassal slaves of bloody Rome!
If Marmion's late remorse should wake,
Full soon such vengeance will he take,
That you shall wish the fiery Dane
Had rather been your guest again.
Behind, a darker hour ascends!
The altars quake, the crosier bends,
The ire of a despotic king
Rides forth upon destruction's wing.
Then shall these vaults, so strong and deep,
Burst open to the sea-wind's sweep;
Some traveller then shall find my bones,
Whitening amid disjointed stones,
And, ignorant of priests' cruelty,
Marvel such relics here should be."—

XXXII.

Fixed was her look, and stern her air;
Back from her shoulders streamed her hair;
The locks, that wont her brow to shade,
Stared up erectly from her head;
Her figure seemed to rise more high;
Her voice, despair's wild energy
Had given a tone of prophecy.
Appalled the astonished conclave sate;
With stupid eyes, the men of fate
Gazed on the light inspired form,
And listened for the avenging storm;
The judges felt the victim's dread;
No hand was moved, no word was said,
Till thus the abbot's doom was given,
Raising his sightless balls to heaven:—
"Sister, let thy sorrows cease;
Sinful brother, part in peace!"
From that dire dungeon, place of doom,
Of execution too, and tomb,
Paced forth the judges three;
Sorrow it were, and shame, to tell
The butcher-work that there befel,
When they had glided from the cell
Of sin and misery.

XXXIII.

A hundred winding steps convey
That conclave to the upper day;
But, ere they breathed the fresher air,
They heard the shriekings of despair,
And many a stifled groan:
With speed their upward way they take,
(Such speed as age and fear can make,)
And crossed themselves for terror's sake,
As hurrying, tottering on;
Even in the vesper's heavenly tone
They seemed to hear a dying groan,
And bade the passing knell to toll
For welfare of a parting soul.
Slow o'er the midnight wave it swung,
Northumbrian rocks in answer rung;
To Warkworth cell the echoes rolled,
His beads the wakeful hermit told;
The Bamborough peasant raised his head,
But slept ere half a prayer he said;
So far was heard the mighty knell,
The stag sprung up on Cheviot Fell,
Spread his broad nostril to the wind,
Listed before, aside, behind,
Then couched him down beside the hind,
And quaked among the mountain fern,
To hear that sound, so dull and stern.

INTRODUCTION TO CANTO III.

TO WILLIAM ERSKINE, Esq.

Ashestiel, Ettrick Forest.

Like April morning clouds, that pass,
With varying shadow, o'er the grass,
And imitate, on field and furrow,
Life's chequered scene of joy and sorrow;
Like streamlet of the mountain north,
Now in a torrent racing forth,
Now winding slow its silver train,
And almost slumbering on the plain;
Like breezes of the autumn day,
Whose voice inconstant dies away,
And ever swells again as fast,
When the ear deems its murmur past;
Thus various, my romantic theme
Flits, winds, or sinks, a morning dream.
Yet pleased, our eye pursues the trace
Of light and shade's inconstant race;
Pleased, views the rivulet afar,
Weaving its maze irregular;
And pleased, we listen as the breeze
Heaves its wild sigh through autumn trees;
Then wild as cloud, or stream, or gale,
Flow on, flow unconfined, my tale.
Need I to thee, dear Erskine, tell,
I love the license all too well,
In sounds now lowly, and now strong,
To raise the desultory song?—
Oft, when mid such capricious chime,
Some transient fit of lofty rhyme,
To thy kind judgment seemed excuse
For many an error of the muse;
Oft hast thou said, "If, still mis-spent,
Thine hours to poetry are lent:
Go, and, to tame thy wandering course,
Quaff from the fountain at the source;
Approach those masters, o'er whose tomb,
Immortal laurels ever bloom:
Instructive of the feebler bard,
Still from the grave their voice is heard;
From them, and from the paths they showed,
Choose honoured guide and practised road;

Nor ramble on through brake and maze,
With harpers rude of barbarous days.
"Or, deem'st thou not our later time,
Yields topic meet for classic rhyme?
Hast thou no elegiac verse
For Brunswick's venerable hearse?
What! not a line, a tear, a sigh,
When valour bleeds for liberty?
Oh, hero of that glorious time,
When, with unrivalled light sublime,—
Though martial Austria, and though all
The might of Russia, and the Gaul,
Though banded Europe stood her foes—
The star of Brandenburgh arose!
Thou couldst not live to see her beam
For ever quenched in Jena's stream.
Lamented chief!—It was not given,
To thee to change the doom of heaven,
And crush that dragon in its birth,
Predestined scourge of guilty earth.
Lamented chief!—not thine the power,
To save in that presumptuous hour,
When Prussia hurried to the field,
And snatched the spear, but left the shield!
Valour and skill 'twas thine to try,
And, tried in vain, 'twas thine to die.
Ill had it seemed thy silver hair
The last, the bitterest pang to share,
For princedoms reft, and scutcheons riven,
And birthrights to usurpers given;
Thy lands, thy children's wrongs to feel,
And witness woes thou could'st not heal!
On thee relenting heaven bestows
For honoured life an honoured close;
And when revolves, in time's sure change,
The hour of Germany's revenge,
When, breathing fury for her sake,
Some new Arminius shall awake.
Her champion, ere he strike, shall come
To whet his sword on Brunswick's tomb.
"Or of the Red-Cross hero teach,
Dauntless in dungeon as on breach:
Alike to him the sea, the shore,
The brand, the bridle, or the oar;
Alike to him the war that calls
Its votaries to the shattered walls,
Which the grim Turk, besmeared with blood,
Against the invincible made good;
Or that, whose thundering voice could wake
The silence of the polar lake,
When stubborn Russ, and metal'd Swede,
On the warped wave their death-game played;
Or that, where vengeance and affright
Howled round the father of the fight,
Who snatched, on Alexandria's sand,
The conqueror's wreath with dying hand.
"Or, if to touch such chord be thine,
Restore the ancient tragic line,
And emulate the notes that rung
From the wild harp, which silent hung,
By silver Avon's holy shore,
Till twice an hundred years rolled o'er;
When she, the bold enchantress, came,
With fearless hand and heart on flame!
From the pale willow snatched the treasure,
And swept it with a kindred measure,
Till Avon's swans, while rung the grove
With Montfort's hate and Basil's love,
Awakening at the inspired strain,
Deemed their own Shakspeare lived again."
Thy friendship thus thy judgment wronging,
With praises, not to me belonging,
In task more meet for mightiest powers,
Would'st thou engage my thriftless hours.
But say, my Erskine, hast thou weighed
That secret power by all obeyed,
Which warps not less the passive mind,
Its source concealed or undefined;
Whether an impulse, that has birth
Soon as the infant wakes on earth,
One with our feelings and our powers,
And rather part of us than ours;
Or whether fitlier termed the sway
Of habit, formed in early day?
Howe'er derived, its force confessed
Rules with despotic sway the breast,
And drags us on by viewless chain,
While taste and reason plead in vain.
Look east, and ask the Belgian why,
Beneath Batavia's sultry sky,
He seeks not, eager to inhale,
The freshness of the mountain gale,
Content to rear his whitened wall
Beside the dank and dull canal?
He'll say, from youth he loved to see
The white sail gliding by the tree.
Or see yon weather-beaten hind,
Whose sluggish herds before him wind,
Whose tattered plaid and rugged cheek
His northern clime and kindred speak;
Through England's laughing meads he goes,
And England's wealth around him flows;
Ask, if it would content him well,
At ease in these gay plains to dwell,
Where hedge-rows spread a verdant screen,
And spires and forests intervene,
And the neat cottage peeps between?
No, not for these will he exchange
His dark Lochaber's boundless range;
Nor for fair Devon's meads forsake
Bennevis gray and Garry's lake.
Thus, while I ape the measure wild
Of tales that charmed me yet a child,
Rude though they be, still with the chime,
Return the thoughts of early time;
And feelings, roused in life's first day,
Glow in the line, and prompt the lay.
Then rise those crags, that mountain tower,
Which charmed my fancy's wakening hour.
Though no broad river swept along
To claim, perchance, heroic song;
Though sighed no groves in summer gale,
To prompt of love a softer tale;
Though scarce a puny streamlet's speed
Claimed homage from a shepherd's reed:
Yet was poetic impulse given,
By the green hill and clear blue heaven.
It was a barren scene, and wild,
Where naked cliffs were rudely piled;
But ever and anon between
Lay velvet tufts of loveliest green;
And well the lonely infant knew
Recesses where the wall-flower grew,
And honey-suckle loved to crawl
Up the low crag and ruined wall.
I deemed such nooks the sweetest shade
The sun in all his round surveyed;
And still I thought that shattered tower
The mightiest work of human power;
And marvelled, as the aged hind
With some strange tale bewitched my mind,
Of forayers, who, with headlong force,
Down from that strength had spurred their horse,
Their southern rapine to renew,
Far in the distant Cheviot's blue,

And home returning, filled the hall
With revel, wassel-rout, and brawl.—
Methought that still with trump and clang
The gate-way's broken arches rang;
Methought grim features, seamed with scars,
Glared through the window's rusty bars.
And ever, by the winter hearth,
Old tales I heard of woe or mirth,
Of lovers' sleights, of ladies' charms,
Of witches' spells, of warriors' arms;
Of patriot battles, won of old
By Wallace wight and Bruce the bold;
Of later fields of feud and fight,
When, pouring from their highland height,
The Scottish clans, in headlong sway,
Had swept the scarlet ranks away.
While stretched at length upon the floor,
Again I fought each combat o'er,
Pebbles and shells, in order laid,
The mimic ranks of war displayed;
And onward still the Scottish lion bore,
And still the scattered Southron fled before.
Still, with vain fondness, could I trace,
Anew, each kind familiar face,
That brightened at our evening fire;
From the thatched mansion's gray-haired sire,
Wise without learning, plain and good,
And sprung of Scotland's gentler blood;
Whose eye in age, quick, clear, and keen,
Showed what in youth its glance had been;
Whose doom discording neighbours sought,
Content with equity unbought;
To him the venerable priest,
Our frequent and familiar guest,
Whose life and manners well could paint
Alike the student and the saint;
Alas! whose speech too oft I broke
With gambol rude and timeless joke:
For I was wayward, bold, and wild,
A self-willed imp, a grandame's child;
But, half a plague, and half a jest,
Was still endured, beloved, earest.
From me, thus nurtured, dost thou ask
The classic poet's well-conned task?
Nay, Erskine, nay—on the wild hill
Let the wild heathbell flourish still;
Cherish the tulip, prune the vine,
But freely let the woodbine twine,
And leave untrimmed the eglantine:
Nay, my friend, nay—since oft thy praise
Hath given fresh vigour to my lays,
Since oft thy judgment could refine
My flattened thought, or cumbrous line,
Still kind, as is thy wont, attend,
And in the minstrel spare the friend;
Though wild as cloud, as stream, as gale,
Flow forth, flow unrestrained, my tale!

CANTO III.

THE HOSTEL, OR INN.

I.

The livelong day lord Marmion rode:
The mountain-path the Palmer showed;
By glen and streamlet winded still,
Where stunted birches hid the rill.
They might not choose the lowland road,
For the Merse foragers were abroad,
Who, fired with hate and thirst of prey,
Had scarcely failed to bar their way.
Oft on the trampling band, from crown
Of some tall cliff, the deer looked down;
On wing of jet, from his repose
In the deep heath, the black-cock rose;
Sprung from the gorse the timid roe,
Nor waited for the bending bow;
And when the stony path began,
By which the naked peak they wan,
Up flew the snowy ptarmigan.
The noon had long been passed before
They gained the height of Lammermoor;
Thence winding down the northern way,
Before them, at the close of day,
Old Gifford's towers and hamlet lay.

II.

No summons calls them to the tower,
To spend the hospitable hour.
To Scotland's camp the lord was gone,
His cautious dame, in bower alone,
Dreaded her castle to unclose,
So late, to unknown friends or foes.
On through the hamlet as they paced,
Before a porch, whose front was graced
With bush and flaggon trimly placed,
Lord Marmion drew his rein:
The village inn[1] seemed large, though rude:
Its cheerful fire and hearty food
Might well relieve his train.
Down from their seats the horsemen sprang,
With jingling spurs the court-yard rang;
They bind their horses to the stall,
For forage, food, and firing call,
And various clamour fills the hall;
Weighing the labour with the cost,
Toils every where the bustling host.

III.

Soon, by the chimney's merry blaze,
Through the rude hostel might you gaze;
Might see, where in dark nook aloof,
The rafters of the sooty roof
Bore wealth of winter cheer;
Of sea fowl dried, and solands store,
And gammons of the tusky boar,
And savoury haunch of deer.
The chimney-arch projected wide;
Above, around it, and beside,
Were tools for housewives' hand;
Nor wanted, in that martial day,
The implements of Scottish fray,
The buckler, lance, and brand.
Beneath its shade, the place of state,
On oaken settle Marmion sate,
And viewed, around the blazing hearth,
His followers mix in noisy mirth,
Whom with brown ale, in jolly tide,
From ancient vessels ranged aside,
Full actively their host supplied.

IV.

Theirs was the glee of martial breast,
And laughter theirs at little jest;
And oft lord Marmion deigned to aid,
And mingle in the mirth they made:
For though, with men of high degree,
The proudest of the proud was he,
Yet, trained in camps, he knew the art
To win the soldier's hardy heart.
They love a captain to obey,
Boisterous as March, yet fresh as May;
With open hand, and brow as free,
Lover of wine and minstrelsy;
Ever the first to scale a tower,
As venturous in a lady's bower:—
Such buxom chief shall lead his host
From India's fires to Zembla's frost.

V.

Resting upon his pilgrim staff,
Right opposite the Palmer stood:
His thin dark visage seen but half,
Half hidden by his hood.
Still fixed on Marmion was his look,
Which he, who ill such gaze could brook,
Strove by a frown to quell;
But not for that, though more than once
Full met their stern encountering glance,
The Palmer's visage fell.

VI.

By fits less frequent from the crowd
Was heard the burst of laughter loud;
For still as squire and archer stared
On that dark face and matted beard,
Their glee and game declined.
All gazed at length in silence drear,
Unbroke, save when in comrade's ear
Some yeoman, wondering in his fear,
Thus whispered forth his mind:
"Saint Mary! saw'st thou ere such sight?
How pale his cheek, his eye how bright,
Whene'er the fire-brand's fickle light
Glances beneath his cowl!
Full on our lord he sets his eye;
For his best palfrey, would not I
Endure that sullen scowl."—

VII.

But Marmion, as to chase the awe
Which thus had quelled their hearts, who saw
The ever-varying fire-light show
That figure stern and face of woe,
Now called upon a squire:—
"Fitz-Eustace, know'st thou not some lay,
To speed the lingering night away?
We slumber by the fire."

VIII.

"So please you," thus the youth rejoined,
"Our choicest minstrel's left behind.
Ill may we hope to please your ear,
Accustomed Constant's strains to hear.
The harp full deftly can he strike,
And wake the lover's lute alike;
To dear Saint Valentine, no thrush
Sings livelier from a spring-tide bush;
No nightingale her love-lorn tune
More sweetly warbles to the moon.
Woe to the cause, whate'er it be,
Detains from us his melody,
Lavished on rocks, and billows stern,
Or duller monks of Lindisfern.
Now must I venture, as I may,
To sing his favourite roundelay."

IX.

A mellow voice Fitz-Eustace had,
The air he chose was wild and sad;
Such have I heard, in Scottish land,
Rise from the busy harvest band,
When falls before the mountaineer,
On lowland plains, the ripened ear.
Now one shrill voice the notes prolong,
Now a wild chorus swells the song:
Oft have I listened, and stood still,
As it came softened up the hill,
And deemed it the lament of men
Who languish'd for their native glen;
And thought how sad would be such sound,
On Susquehannah's swampy ground,
Kentucky's wood-encumbered brake,
Or wild Ontario's boundless lake,
Where heart-sick exiles, in the strain,
Recalled fair Scotland's hills again!

X.

SONG.

Where shall the lover rest,
Whom the fates sever
From his true maiden's breast,
Parted for ever?
Where, through groves deep and high,
Sounds the far billow,
Where early violets die,
Under the willow.

CHORUS.

Eleu loro, &c. Soft shall be his pillow.

There, through the summer day,
Cool streams are laving;
There, while the tempests sway,
Scarce are boughs waving;
There, thy rest shalt thou take,
Parted for ever,
Never again to wake,
Never, O never.

CHORUS.

Eleu loro, &c. Never, O never.

XI.

Where shall the traitor rest,
He, the deceiver,
Who could win maiden's breast,
Ruin, and leave her?
In the lost battle,
Borne down by the flying,
Where mingles war's rattle
With groans of the dying.

CHORUS.

Eleu loro, &c. There shall he be lying.

Her wing shall the eagle flap
O'er the false-hearted,
His warm blood the wolf shall lap,
Ere life be parted.
Shame and dishonour sit
By his grave ever;
Blessing shall hallow it,—
Never, O never.

CHORUS.

Eleu loro, &c. Never, O never.

XII.

It ceased, the melancholy sound,
And silence sunk on all around.
The air was sad; but sadder still
It fell on Marmion's ear,
And plained as if disgaace and ill,
And shameful death, were near.
He drew his mantle past his face,
Between it and the band,
And rested with his head a space,
Reclining on his hand.
His thoughts I scan not; but I ween,
That, could their import have been seen,
The meanest groom in all the hall,
That e'er tied courser to a stall,
Would scarce have wished to be their prey,
For Lutterward and Fontenaye.

XIII.

High minds, of native pride and force,
Most deeply feel thy pangs, Remorse!
Fear, for their scourge, mean villains have—
Thou art the torturer of the brave!
Yet fatal strength they boast, to steel
Their minds to bear the wounds they feel.

Even while they writhe beneath the smart
Of civil conflict in the heart.
For soon lord Marmion raised his head,
And, smiling, to Fitz-Eustace said,—
"Is it not strange, that, as ye sung,
Seemed in mine ear a death-peal rung,
Such as in nunneries they toll
For some departing sister's soul?
Say, what may this portend?"—
Then first the palmer silence broke
(The live-long day he had not spoke,)
"The death of a dear friend."[2]

XIV.

Marmion, whose steady heart and eye
Ne'er changed in worst extremity;
Marmion, whose soul could scantly brook,
Even from his king, a haughty look;
Whose accent of command controlled,
In camps, the boldest of the bold—
Thought, look, and utterance, failed him now,
Fallen was his glance, and flushed his brow:
For either in the tone,
Or something in the palmer's look,
So full upon his conscience strook,
That answer he found none.
Thus oft it haps, that when within
They shrink at sense of secret sin,
A feather daunts the brave,
A fool's wild speech confounds the wise,
And proudest princes veil their eyes
Before their meanest slave.

XV.

Well might he falter!—by his aid
Was Constance Beverly betrayed;
Not that he augur'd of the doom,
Which on the living closed the tomb:
But, tired to hear the desperate maid
Threaten by turns, beseech, upbraid;
And wroth, because, in wild despair,
She practised on the life of Clare;
Its fugitive the church he gave,
Though not a victim, but a slave;
And deemed restraint in convent strange
Would hide her wrongs and her revenge.
Himself, proud Henry's favourite peer,
Held Romish thunders idle fear;
Secure his pardon he might hold,
For some slight mulct of penance gold.
Thus judging, he gave secret way,
When the stern priests surprised their prey;
His train but deemed the favourite page
Was left behind, to spare his age;
Or other if they deemed, none dared
To mutter what he thought and heard:
Wo to the vassal, who durst pry
Into lord Marmion's privacy!

XVI.

His conscience slept—he deemed her well,
And safe secured in distant cell;
But, wakened by her favourite lay,
And that strange palmer's boding say,
That fell so ominous and drear,
Full on the object of his fear,
To aid remorse's venomed throes,
Dark tales of convent vengeance rose;
And Constance, late betrayed and scorned
All lovely on his soul returned;
Lovely as when, at treacherous call,
She left her convent's peaceful wall,
Crimsoned with shame, with terror mute,
Dreading alike escape, pursuit,
Till love, victorious o'er alarms,
Hid fears and blushes in his arms.

XVII.

"Alas!" he thought, "how changed that mien!
How changed these timid looks have been,
Since years of guilt, and of disguise,
Have steeled her brow, and armed her eyes!
No more of virgin terror speaks
The blood that mantles in her cheeks;
Fierce, and unfeminine, are there,
Frenzy for joy, for grief, despair;
And I the cause—for whom were given
Her peace on earth, her hopes in heaven!
"Would," thought he, as the picture grows,
"I on its stalk had left the rose!
Oh why should man's success remove
The very charms that wake his love!
Her convent's peaceful solitude
Is now a prison harsh and rude;
And, pent within the narrow cell,
How will her spirit chafe and swell!
How brook the stern monastic laws!
The penance how—and I the cause!
Vigil and scourge—perchance even worse!"—
And twice he rose to cry "to horse!"
And twice his sovereign's mandate came,
Like damp upon a kindling flame;
And twice he thought, "Gave I not charge
She should be safe, though not at large?
They durst not, for their island, shred
One golden ringlet from her head."—

XVIII.

While thus in Marmion's bosom strove
Repentance and reviving love,
Like whirlwinds, whose contending sway
I've seen Loch Vennachar obey,
Their host the palmer's speech had heard,
And, talkative, took up the word:—
"Ay, reverend pilgrim, you, who stray
From Scotland's simple land away,
To visit realms afar,
Full often learn the art to know
Of future weal, or future wo,
By word, or sign, or star.
Yet might a knight his fortune hear,
If, knight like, he despises fear,
Not far from hence;—if fathers old
Aright our hamlet-legend told."—
These broken words the menials move
(For marvels still the vulgar love;)
And, Marmion giving license cold,
His tale the host thus gladly told.

XIX.

THE HOST'S TALE.

"A clerk could tell what years have flown
Since Alexander filled our throne
(Third monarch of that warlike name,)
And eke the time when here he came
To seek sir Hugo, then our lord:
A braver never drew a sword;
A wiser never, at the hour
Of midnight, spoke the word of power;
The same, whom ancient records call
The founder of the Goblin-Hall.[3]
I would, sir knight, your longer stay
Gave you that cavern to survey.
Of lofty roof, and ample size,
Beneath the castle deep it lies:
To hew the living rock profound,
The floor to pave, the arch to round,

There never toiled a mortal arm,
It all was wrought by word and charm;
And I have heard my grandsire say,
That the wild clamour and affray
Of those dread artisans of hell,
Who laboured under Hugo's spell,
Sounded as loud as ocean's war,
Among the caverns of Dunbar.

XX.

" The king lord Gifford's castle sought,
Deep labouring with uncertain thought:
Even then he mustered all his host,
To meet upon the western coast;
For Norse and Danish galleys plied
Their oars within the Frith of Clyde.
There floated Haco's banner trim,
Above Norweyan warriors grim,[4]
Savage of heart, and large of limb;
Threatening both continent and isle,
Bute, Arran, Cunninghame, and Kyle.
Lord Gifford, deep beneath the ground,
Heard Alexander's bugle sound,
And tarried not his garb to change,
But, in his wizard habit strange,[5]
Came forth,—a quaint and fearful sight!
His mantle lined with fox-skins white;
His high and wrinkled forehead bore
A pointed cap, such as of yore
Clerks say that Pharoah's magi wore;
His shoes were marked with cross and spell,
Upon his breast a pentacle;[6]
His zone, of virgin parchment thin,
Or, as some tell, of dead-man's skin,
Bore many a planetary sign,
Combust, and retrograde, and trine;
And in his hand he held, prepared,
A naked sword without a guard.

XXI.

" Dire dealings with the fiendish race
Had marked strange lines upon his face;
Vigil and fast had worn him grim;
His eyesight dazzled seemed, and dim,
As one unused to upper day;
Even his own menials with dismay
Beheld, sir knight, the griesly sire,
In this unwonted wild attire;
Unwonted,—for traditions run,
He seldom thus beheld the sun.
' I know,' he said,—his voice was hoarse,
And broken seemed its hollow force,—
' I know the cause, although untold,
Why the king seeks his vassal's hold:
Vainly from me my liege would know
His kingdom's future weal or wo;
But yet if strong his arm and heart,
His courage may do more than art.

XXII.

" ' Of middle air the demons proud,
Who ride upon the racking cloud,
Can read, in fixed or wandering star,
The issue of events afar,
But still their sullen aid withhold,
Save when by mightier force controlled.
Such late I summoned to my hall:
And though so potent was the call,
That scarce the deepest nook of hell
I deemed a refuge from the spell;
Yet, obstinate in silence still,
The haughty demon mocks my skill.
But thou,—who little knowest thy might,
As born upon that blessed night,
When yawning graves, and dying groan,
Proclaimed hell's empire overthrown,—[7]
With untaught valour shalt compel
Response denied to magic spell.'—
' Gramercy,' quoth our monarch free,
' Place him but front to front with me,
And, by this good and honoured brand,
The gift of Cœur de-Lion's hand,—
Soothly I swear, that, tide what tide,
The demon shall a buffet bide.'
His bearing bold the wizard viewed,
And thus, well pleased, his speech renewed:—
' There spoke the blood of Malcolm!—mark:
Forth pacing hence, at midnight dark,
The rampart seek, whose circling crown
Crests the ascent of yonder down:
A southern entrance shalt thou find;
There hault, and there thy bugle wind,
And trust thine elfin foe to see,
In guise of thine worst enemy:
Couch then thy lance, and spur thy steed—
Upon him! and Saint George to speed!
If he go down, thou soon shalt know
Whate'er these airy sprites can show;—
If thy heart fail thee in the strife,
I am no warrant for thy life.'—

XXIII.

" Soon as the midnight bell did ring,
Alone, and armed, forth rode the king
To that old camp's deserted round:
Sir knight, you well might mark the mound,
Left hand the town,—the Pictish race,
The trench, long since, in blood did trace;
The moor around is brown and bare,
The space within is green and fair.
The spot our village children know,
For there the earliest wild flowers grow;
But wo betide the wandering wight,
That treads its circles in the night.
The breadth across, a bowshot clear,
Gives ample space for full career;
Opposed to the four points of heaven,
By four deep gaps are entrance given.
The southernmost our monarch past,
Halted, and blew a gallant blast;
And on the north, within the ring,
Appeared the form of England's king,
Who then, a thousand leagues afar,
In Palestine waged holy war:
Yet arms like England's did he wield,
Alike the leopards in the shield,
Alike his Syrian courser's frame,
The rider's length of limb the same:
Long afterwards did Scotland know,
Fell Edward* was her deadliest foe.

XXIV.

" The vision made our monarch start,
But soon he manned his noble heart,
And, in the first career they ran,
The elfin knight fell, horse and man;
Yet did a splinter of his lance
Through Alexander's visor glance,
And raised the skin—a puny wound.
The king, light leaping to the ground,
With naked blade his phantom foe
Compelled the future war to show.
Of Largs he saw the glorious plain,
Where still gigantic bones remain,
Memorial of the Danish war;

* Edward I, surnamed Longshanks.

Himself he saw, amid the field,
On high his brandished war-axe wield,
And strike proud Haco from his car;
While all around the shadowy kings
Denmark's grim ravens cowered their wings.
'Tis said, that, in that awful night,
Remoter visions met his sight,
Fore-showing future conquests far,
When our sons' sons wage northern war;
A royal city, tower, and spire,
Reddened the midnight sky with fire,
And shouting crews her navy bore
Triumphant to the victor shore.
Such signs may learned clerks explain,
They pass the wit of simple swain.

XXV.

"The joyful king turned home again,
Headed his host, and quelled the Dane;
But yearly, when returned the night
Of his strange combat with the sprite,
His wound must bleed and smart;
Lord Gifford then would gibing say,
'Bold as ye were, my liege, ye pay
The penance of your start.'
Long since, beneath Dunfermline's nave,
King Alexander fills his grave,
Our lady give him rest!
Yet still the mighty spear and shield
The elfin warrior doth wield,
Upon the brown hill's breast;
And many a knight hath proved his chance,
In the charmed ring to break a lance,
But all have foully sped;
Save two, as legends tell, and they
Were Wallace wight, and Gilbert Hay.—
Gentles, my tale is said."—

XXVI.

The quaighs* were deep, the liquor strong,
And on the tale the yeoman-throng,
Had made a comment sage and long,
But Marmion gave a sign;
And, with their lord, the squires retire;
The rest, around the hostel fire,
Their drowsy limbs recline;
For pillow, underneath each head,
The quiver and the targe were laid.
Deep slumbering on the hostel floor,
Oppressed with toil and ale, they snore:
The dying flame, in fitful change,
Threw on the group its shadows strange.

XXVII.

Apart, and nestling in the hay
Of a waste loft, Fitz-Eustace lay;
Scarce, by the pale moonlight, were seen
The foldings of his mantle green:
Lightly he dreamt, as youth will dream,
Of sport by thicket, or by stream,
Of hawk or hound, of ring or glove,
Or, lighter yet, of lady's love.
A cautious tread his slumber broke,
And close beside him, when he woke,
In moonbeam half, and half in gloom,
Stood a tall form, with nodding plume;
But, ere his dagger Eustace drew,
His master Marmion's voice he knew.

XXVIII.

—"Fitz-Eustace! rise,—I cannot rest;
Yon churl's wild legend haunts my breast,
And graver thoughts have chafed my mood.
The air must cool my feverish blood;
And fain would I ride forth, to see
The scene of elfin chivalry.
Arise, and saddle me my steed,
And, gentle Eustace, take good heed
Thou dost not rouse these drowsy slaves;
I would not that the prating knaves
Had cause for saying, o'er their ale,
That I could credit such a tale."
Then softly down the steps they slid,
Eustace the stable-door undid,
And, darkling, Marmion's steed arrayed,
While, whispering, thus the baron said:—

XXIX.

"Did'st never, good my youth, hear tell
That on the hour when I was born,
St. George, who graced my sire's chapelle,
Down from his steed of marble fell,
A weary wight forlorn?
The flattering chaplains all agree,
The champion left his steed to me.
I would, the omen's truth to show,
That I could meet this elfin foe!
Blith would I battle, for the right
To ask one question at the sprite:—
Vain thought! for elves, if elves there be,
An empty race, by fount or sea,
To dashing waters dance and sing,
Or round the green oak wheel their ring."—
Thus speaking, he his steed bestrode,
And from the hostel slowly rode.

XXX.

Fitz-Eustace followed him abroad,
And marked him pace the village road,
And listened to his horse's tramp,
Till, by the lessening sound,
He judged that of the Pictish camp
Lord Marmion sought the round.
Wonder it seemed, in the squire's eyes,
That one, so wary held, and wise,—
Of whom 'twas said, he scarce received
For gospel what the church believed,—
Should, stirred by idle tale,
Ride forth in silence of the night,
As hoping half to meet a sprite,
Arrayed in plate and mail.
For little did Fitz-Eustace know,
That passions, in contending flow
Unfix the strongest mind;
Wearied from doubt to doubt to flee,
We welcome fond credulity,
Guide confident, though blind.

XXXI.

Little for this Fitz-Eustace cared,
But, patient, waited till he heard,
At distance, pricked to utmost speed,
The foot-tramp of a flying steed,
Come town-ward rushing on:
First, dead, as if on turf it trod,
Then clattering on the village road,
In other pace than forth he yode,*
Returned lord Marmion.
Down hastily he sprung from selle,
And, in his haste, well nigh he fell;
To the squire's hand the rein he threw,
And spoke no word as he withdrew:
But yet the moonlight did betray,
The falcon crest was soiled with clay;

* A wooden cup, composed of staves hooped together.

* Used by old poets for *went*.

And plainly might Fitz-Eustace see,
By stains upon the charger's knee,
And his left side, that on the moor
He had not kept his footing sure.
Long musing on these wondrous signs,
At length to rest the squire reclines—
Broken and short; for still, between,
Would dreams of terror intervene:
Eustace did ne'er so blithly mark
The first notes of the morning lark.

INTRODUCTION TO CANTO IV.

TO JAMES SKENE, Esq.

Ashestiel, Ettrick Forest.

An ancient minstrel sagely said,
"Where is the life which late we led?"
That motely clown, in Arden wood,
Whom humorous Jaques with envy viewed,
Not even that clown could amplify,
On this trite text, so long as I.
Eleven years we now may tell,
Since we have known each other well;
Since, riding side by side, our hand
First drew the voluntary brand;
And sure, through many a varied scene,
Unkindness never came between.
Away these winged years have flown,
To join the mass of ages gone;
And though deep marked, like all below,
With chequered shades of joy and wo;
Though thou o'er realms, and seas hast ranged,
Marked cities lost, and empires changed,
While here, at home, my narrower ken
Somewhat of manners saw, and men;
Though varying wishes, hopes, and fears,
Fevered the progress of these years,
Yet now days, weeks, and months, but seem
The recollection of a dream;
So still we glide down to the sea
Of fathomless eternity.
Even now it scarcely seems a day,
Since first I turned this idle lay;
A task so often thrown aside,
When leisure graver cares denied,
That now, November's dreary gale,
Whose voice inspired my opening tale,
That same November gale once more
Whirls the dry leaves on Yarrow shore.
Their vexed boughs streaming to the sky,
Once more our naked birches sigh,
And Blackhouse heights, and Ettrick Pen,
Have donn'd their wintry shrouds again;
And mountain dark, and flooded mead,
Bid us forsake the banks of Tweed.
Earlier than wont along the sky,
Mixed with the rack, the snow-mists fly;
The shepherd, who, in summer sun,
Has something of our envy won,
As thou with pencil, I with pen,
The features traced of hill and glen;
He who, outstretched the livelong day,
At ease among the heath-flowers lay,
Viewed the light clouds with vacant look,
Or slumbered o'er his tattered book,
Or idly busied him to guide
His angle o'er the lessened tide;—
At midnight now, the snowy plain
Finds sterner labour for the swain.
When red hath set the beamless sun,
Through heavy vapours dank and dun;
When the tired ploughman, dry and warm,
Hears, half asleep, the rising storm
Hurling the hail and sleeted rain,
Against the casement's tinkling pane;
The sounds that drive wild deer, and fox,
To shelter in the brake and rocks,
Are warnings which the shepherd ask
To dismal, and to dangerous task.
Oft he looks forth, and hopes, in vain,
The blast may sink in mellowing rain;
Till, dark above and white below,
Decided drives the flaky snow,
And forth the hardy swain must go.
Long, with dejected look and whine,
To leave the hearth his dogs repine;
Whistling and cheering them to aid,
Around his back he wreathes the plaid:
His flock he gathers, and he guides
To open downs and mountain sides,
Where fiercest though the tempest blow,
Least deeply lies the drift below.
The blast, that whistles o'er the fells,
Stiffens his locks to icicles;
Oft he looks back, while, streaming far,
His cottage window seems a star,—
Loses its feeble gleam,—and then
Turns patient to the blast again,
And, facing to the tempest's sweep,
Drives through the gloom his lagging sheep.
If fails his heart, if his limbs fail,
Benumbing death is in the gale;
His paths, his landmarks, all unknown,
Close to the hut, no more his own,
Close to the aid he sought in vain,
The morn may find the stiffened swain:
The widow sees, at dawning pale,
His orphans raise their feeble wail;
And, close beside him, in the snow,
Poor Yarrow, partner of their wo,
Couches upon his master's breast,
And licks his cheek, to break his rest.
Who envies now the shepherd's lot,
His healthy fare, his rural cot,
His summer couch by greenwood tree,
His rustic kirn's* loud revelry,
His native hill-notes, tuned on high,
To Marion of the blithsome eye;
His crook, his scrip, his oaten reed,
And all Arcadia's golden creed?
Changes not so with us, my Skene,
Of human life the varying scene?
Our youthful summer oft we see
Dance by on wings of game and glee,
While the dark storm reserves its rage,
Against the winter of our age:
As he, the ancient chief of Troy,
His manhood spent in peace and joy;
But Grecian fires, and loud alarms,
Called ancient Priam forth to arms.
Then happy those—since each must drain
His share of pleasure, share of pain.
Then happy those, beloved of heaven,
To whom the mingled cup is given;
Whose lenient sorrows find relief,
Whose joys are chastened by their grief.
And such a lot, my Skene, was thine,
When thou of late wert doomed to twine,—
Just when thy bridal hour was by,—
The cypress with the myrtle tie.
Just on thy bride her sire had smiled,
And blessed the union of his child,

* The Scottish harvest-home.

When love must change its joyous cheer,
And wipe affection's filial tear.
Nor did the actions, next his end,
Speak more the father than the friend:
Scarce had lamented Forbes paid[2]
The tribute to his minstrel's shade;
The tale of friendship scarce was told,
Ere the narrator's heart was cold—
Far we may search before we find
A heart so manly and so kind!
But not around his honoured urn,
Shall friends alone and kindred mourn;
The thousand eyes his care had dried,
Pour at his name a bitter tide;
And frequent falls the grateful dew,
For benefits the world ne'er knew.
If mortal charity dare claim
The Almighty's attributed name,
Inscribe above his mouldering clay,
"The widow's shield, the orphan's stay."
Nor, though it wake thy sorrow, deem
My verse intrudes on this sad theme;
For sacred was the pen that wrote,
"Thy father's friend forget thou not:"
And grateful title may I plead,
For many a kindly word and deed,
To bring my tribute to his grave:—
'Tis little—but 'tis all I have.

To thee, perchance, this rambling strain
Recalls our summer walks again;
When, doing nought,—and, to speak true,
Not anxious to find aught to do,—
The wild unbounded hills we ranged,
While oft our talk its topic changed,
And, desultory as our way,
Ranged, unconfined, from grave to gay.
Even when it flagged, as oft will chance,
No effort made to break its trance,
We could right pleasantly pursue
Our sports in social silence too;
Thou gravely labouring to portray
The blighted oak's fantastic spray;
I spelling o'er, with much delight,
The legend of that antique knight,
Tirante by name, yeleped the White.
At either's feet a trusty squire,
Pandour and Camp, with eyes of fire,
Jealous, each other's motions viewed,
And scarce suppressed their ancient feud.
The laverock whistled from the cloud;
The stream was lively, but not loud;
From the white thorn the May-flower shed
Its dewy fragrance round our head:
Not Ariel lived more merrily
Under the blossomed bough, than we.

And blithsome nights, too, have been ours,
When winter stript the summer's bowers.
Careless we heard, what now I hear,
The wild blast sighing deep and drear,
When fires were bright, and lamps beamed gay,
And ladies tuned the lovely lay;
And he was held a laggard soul,
Who shunned to quaff the sparkling bowl.
Then he, whose absence we deplore,
Who breathes the gales of Devon's shore,
The longer missed, bewailed the more;
And thou, and I, and dear loved R———,
And one whose name I may not say,—
For not Mimosa's tender tree
Shrinks sooner from the touch than he,—
In merry chorus well combined,
With laughter drowned the whistling wind.
Mirth was within; and care, without,
Might gnaw her nails to hear our shout.
Not but amid the buxom scene
Some grave discourse might intervene—
Of the good horse that bore him best,
His shoulder, hoof, and arching crest:
For, like mad Tom's,* our chiefest care,
Was horse to ride, and weapon wear.
Such nights we've had; and, though the game
Of manhood be more sober tame,
And though the field day, or the drill,
Seem less important now—yet still
Such may we hope to share again.
The sprightly thought inspires my strain!
And mark, how, like a horseman true,
Lord Marmion's march I thus renew.

CANTO IV.

THE CAMP.

I.

Eustace, I said, did blithly mark
The first notes of the merry lark.
The lark sung shrill, the cock he crew,
And loudly Marmion's bugles blew,
And, with their light and lively call,
Brought groom and yeoman to the stall.
Whistling they came, and free of heart,
But soon their mood was changed;
Complaint was heard on every part
Of something disarranged.
Some clamoured loud for armour lost;
Some brawled and wrangled with the host;
"By Becket's bones," cried one, "I fear
That some false Scot has stolen my spear!"
Young Blount, lord Marmion's second squire,
Found his steed wet with sweat and mire;
Although the rated horse-boy sware,
Last night he dressed him sleek and fair.
While chafed the impatient squire like thunder,
Old Hubert shouts, in fear and wonder,—
"Help, gentle Blount! help, comrades all!
Bevis lies dying in his stall:
To Marmion who the plight dare tell,
Of the good steed he loves so well?"—
Gaping for fear and ruth, they saw
The charger panting on his straw;
Till one, who would seem wisest, cried,—
"What else but evil could betide,
With that cursed palmer for our guide?
Better we had through mire and bush
Been lantern-led by friar Rush."[3]†

II.

Fitz-Eustace, who the cause but guessed,
Nor wholly understood,
His comrade's clamorous plaints suppressed;
He knew lord Marmion's mood.
Him, ere he issued forth, he sought,
And found deep plunged in gloomy thought,
And did his tale display
Simply, as if he knew of nought
To cause such disarray.
Lord Marmion gave attention cold,
Nor marvelled at the wonders told,—
Passed them as accidents of course,
And bade his clarions sound to horse.

III.

Young Henry Blount, meanwhile, the cost
Had reckoned with their Scottish host;

* See *King Lear*. † *Alias* Will o' the Wisp.

And as the charge he cast and paid,
"Ill thou deserv'st thy hire," he said;
"Dost see, thou knave, my horse's plight?
Fairies have ridden him all the night,
And left him in a foam!
I trust that soon a conjuring band,
With English cross, and blazing brand,
Shall drive the devils from this land,
To their infernal home:
For in this haunted den, I trow,
All night they trampled to and fro."—
The laughing host looked on the hire,—
"Gramercy, gentle southern squire,
And if thou com'st among the rest,
With Scottish broad sword to be blest,
Sharp be the brand, and sure the blow,
And short the pang to undergo."—
Here stayed their talk,—for Marmion
Gave now the signal to set on.
The palmer showing forth the way,
They journeyed all the morning day.

IV.

The green-sward way was smooth and good,
Through Humbie's and through Saltoun's wood;
A forest glade, which, varying still,
Here gave a view of dale and hill;
There narrower closed, till over head
A vaulted screen the branches made.
"A pleasant path," Fitz-Eustace said;
"Such as where errant-knights might see
Adventures of high chivalry;
Might meet some damsel flying fast,
With hair unbound, and looks aghast;
And smooth and level course were here,
In her defence to break a spear.
Here, too, are twilight nooks and dells;
And oft, in such, the story tells,
The damsel kind, from danger freed,
Did grateful pay her champion's meed."—
He spoke to cheer lord Marmion's mind;
Perchance to show his lore designed;
For Eustace much had pored
Upon a huge romantic tome,
In the hall-window of his home,
Imprinted at the antique dome
Of Caxton or De Worde.
Therefore he spoke,—but spoke in vain,
For Marmion answered nought again.

V.

Now sudden, distant trumpets shrill,
In notes prolonged by wood and hill,
Were heard to echo far;
Each ready archer grasped his bow,
But by the flourish soon they know,
They breathed no point of war.
Yet cautious, as in foeman's land,
Lord Marmion's order speeds the band
Some opener ground to gain;
And scarce a furlong had they rode,
When thinner trees, receding, showed
A little woodland plain.
Just in that advantageous glade
The halting troop a line had made,
As forth from the opposing shade
Issued a gallant train.

VI.

First came the trumpets, at whose clang
So late the forest echoes rang;
On prancing steeds they forward pressed,
With scarlet mantle, azure vest;
Each at his trump a banner wore,
Which Scotland's royal scutcheon bore;
Heralds and pursuivants, by name
Bute, Islay, Marchmount, Rothsay, came,
In painted tabards, proudly showing
Gules, argent, or, and azure glowing,
Attendant on a king-at-arms,
Whose hand the armorial truncheon held,
That feudal strife had often quelled,
When wildest its alarms.

VII.

He was a man of middle age;
In aspect manly, grave, and sage,
As on king's errand come;
But in the glances of his eye,
A penetrating, keen, and sly
Expression found its home;
The flash of that satiric rage,
Which, bursting on the early stage,
Branded the vices of the age,
And broke the keys of Rome.
On milk-white palfrey forth he paced;
His cap of maintenance was graced
With the proud heron-plume.
From his steed's shoulder, loin, and breast,
Silk housings swept the ground,
With Scotland's arms, device, and crest,
Embroidered round and round.
The double tressure might you see,
First by Achaius borne,
The thistle, and the fleur-de-lis,
And gallant unicorn.
So bright the king's armorial coat,
That scarce the dazzled eye could note,
In living colours blazoned brave,
The lion, which his title gave.
A train, which well beseemed his state,
But all unarmed, around him wait.
Still is thy name in high account,
And still thy verse has charms,
Sir David Lindesay of the Mount,
Lord lion-king-at-arms![4]

VIII.

Down from his horse did Marmion spring,
Soon as he saw the lion-king;
For well the stately baron knew
To him such courtesy was due,
Whom royal James himself had crowned,
And on his temples placed the round
Of Scotland's ancient diadem;
And wet his brow with hallowed wine,
And on his finger given to shine
The emblematic gem.
Their mutual greetings duly made,
The lion thus his message said:—
"Though Scotland's king hath deeply swore
Ne'er to knit faith with Henry more,
And strictly hath forbid resort
From England to his royal court;
Yet, for he knows lord Marmion's name,
And honours much his warlike fame,
My liege hath deemed it shame, and lack
Of courtesy, to turn him back;
And, by his order, I, your guide,
Must lodging fit and fair provide,
Till finds king James meet time to see
The flower of English chivalry."

IX.

Though inly chafed at this delay,
Lord Marmion bears it as he may,

The palmer, his mysterious guide,
Beholding thus his place supplied,
Sought to take leave in vain:
Strict was the lion-king's command,
That none who rode in Marmion's band
Should sever from the train:
"England has here enow of spies
In lady Heron's witching eyes:"
To Marchmount thus, apart, he said,
But fair pretext to Marmion made.
The right hand path they now decline,
And trace against the stream the Tyne.

X.

At length up that wild dale they wind,
Where Crichtoun-castle[5] crowns the bank;
For there the lion's care assigned
A lodging meet for Marmion's rank.
That castle rises on the steep
Of the green vale of Tyne;
And far beneath, where slow they creep
From pool to eddy, dark and deep,
Where alders moist, and willows weep,
You hear her streams repine.
The towers in different ages rose;
Their various architecture shows
The builders' various hands;
A mighty mass that could oppose,
When deadliest hatred fired its foes,
The vengeful Douglas bands.

XI.

Crichtoun! though now thy miry court
But pens the lazy steer and sheep,
Thy turrets rude and tottered keep
Have been the minstrel's loved resort.
Oft have I traced, within thy fort,
Of mouldering shields the mystic sense,
Scutcheons of honour, or pretence,
Quartered in old armorial sort,
Remains of rude magnificence.
Nor wholly yet hath time defaced
Thy lordly gallery fair;
Nor yet the stony cord unbraced,
Whose twisted knots, with roses laced,
Adorn thy ruined stair.
Still rises unimpaired, below,
The court-yard's graceful portico;
Above its cornice, row and row
Of fair-hewn facets richly show
Their pointed diamond form,
Though there but houseless cattle go
To shield them from the storm.
And, shuddering, still may we explore,
Where oft whilome were captives pent,
The darkness of thy massy-more:*
Or, from thy grass-grown battlement,
May trace, in undulating line,
The sluggish mazes of the Tyne.

XII.

Another aspect Crichtoun showed,
As through its portal Marmion rode;
But yet 'twas melancholy state
Received him at the outer gate;
For none were in the castle then
But women, boys, or aged men.
With eyes scarce dried, the sorrowing dame,
To welcome noble Marmion, came;
Her son, a stripling twelve years old,
Proffered the baron's rein to hold;
For each man that could draw a sword
Had marched that morning with their lord,

* The pit, or prison vault.—See Note.

Earl Adam Hepburn,[6]—he who died
On Flodden by his sovereign's side.
Long may his lady look in vain!
She ne'er shall see his gallant train
Come sweeping back through Crichtoun-dean.
'Twas a brave race, before the name
Of hated Bothwell stained their fame.

XIII.

And here two days did Marmion rest,
With every rite that honour claims,
Attended as the king's own guest;—
Such the command of royal James,
Who marshalled then his land's array,
Upon the Borough-moor that lay.
Perchance he would not foeman's eye
Upon his gathering host should pry,
Till full prepared was every band
To march against the English land.
Here while they dwelt, did Lindesay's wit
Oft cheer the baron's moodier fit:
And, in his turn, he knew to prize
Lord Marmion's powerful mind, and wise,—
Trained in the lore of Rome and Greece,
And policies of war and peace.

XIV.

It chanced, as fell the second night,
That on the battlement they walked,
And, by the slowly fading light,
On varying topics talked;
And, unaware, the herald-bard
Said, Marmion might his toil have spared,
In travelling so far;
For that a messenger from heaven
In vain to James had counsel given
Against the English war:[7]
And, closer questioned, thus he told
A tale which chronicles of old
In Scottish story have enrolled:—

XV.

SIR DAVID LINDESAY'S TALE.

"Of all the palaces so fair,
Built for the royal dwelling,
In Scotland, far beyond compare
Linlithgow is excelling;
And in its park, in jovial June,
How sweet the merry linnet's tune,
How blith the blackbird's lay!
The wild buck bells* from ferny brake,
The coot dives merry on the lake,
The saddest heart might pleasure take
To see all nature gay.
But June is to our sovereign dear
The heaviest month in all the year:
Too well his cause of grief you know,—
June saw his father's overthrow.[9]
Wo to the traitors who could bring
The princely boy against his king!
Still in his conscience burns the sting.
In offices as strict as lent,
King James's June is ever spent.

XVI.

"When last this ruthful month was come,
And in Linlithgow's holy dome
The king, as wont, was praying;
While for his royal father's soul,
The chanters sung, the bells did toll,
The bishop mass was saying—
For now the year brought round again
The day the luckless king was slain—

* An ancient word for the cry of deer.—See Note.

In Katharine's aisle the monarch knelt,
With sackcloth-shirt, and iron belt,
And eyes with sorrow streaming;
Around him, in their stalls of state,
The thistle's knight-companions sate,
Their banners o'er them beaming.
I too was there, and, sooth to tell,
Bedeafened with the jangling knell,
Was watching where the sunbeams fell,
Through the stained casement gleaming;
But, while I marked what next befell,
It seemed as I were dreaming.
Stepped from the crowd a ghostly wight,
In azure gown, with cincture white,
His forehead bald, his head was bare,
Down hung at length his yellow hair.—
Now mock me not when, good my lord,
I pledge to you my knightly-word,
That, when I saw his placid grace,
His simple majesty of face,
His solemn bearing, and his pace
So stately gliding on,—
Seemed to me ne'er did limner paint
So just an image of the saint
Who propped the virgin in her faint,—
The loved apostle John.

XVII.

"He stepped before the monarch's chair,
And stood with rustic plainness there,
And little reverence made;
Nor head, nor body, bowed nor bent,
But on the desk his arm he leant,
And words like these he said,
In a low voice,—but never tone
So thrilled through vein, and nerve, and bone:—
'My mother sent me from afar,
Sir king, to warn thee not to war,—
Wo waits on thine array;
If war thou wilt, of woman fair,
Her witching wiles and wanton snare,
James Stuart, doubly warned, beware:
God keep thee as he may!'
The wondering monarch seemed to seek
For answer, and found none;
And when he raised his head to speak,
The monitor was gone.
The marshal and myself had cast
To stop him as he outward past;
But, lighter than the whirlwind's blast
He vanished from our eyes,
Like sunbeam on the billow cast,
That glances but, and dies."—

XVIII.

While Lindesay told this marvel strange,
The twilight was so pale,
He marked not Marmion's colour change,
While listening to the tale:
But, after a suspended pause,
The baron spoke:—"Of nature's laws
So strong I held the force,
That never super-human cause
Could e'er control their course;
And, three days since, had judged your aim
Was but to make your guest your game.
But I have seen, since past the Tweed,
What much has changed my sceptic creed,
And made me credit aught."—He staid,
And seemed to wish his words unsaid:
But, by that strong emotion pressed,
Which prompts us to unload our breast,
Even when discovery's pain,
To Lindesay did at length unfold
The tale his village host had told
At Gifford, to his train.
Nought of the palmer says he there,
And nought of Constance or of Clare:
The thoughts which broke his sleep, he seems
To mention but as feverish dreams.

XIX.

"In vain," said he, "to rest I spread
My burning limbs, and couched my head:
Fantastic thoughts returned;
And, by their wild dominion led,
My heart within me burned.
So sore was the delirious goad,
I took my steed, and forth I rode,
And, as the moon shone bright and cold,
Soon reached the camp upon the wold.
The southern entrance I past through,
And halted, and my bugle blew.
Methought an answer met my ear,—
Yet was the blast so low and drear,
So hollow, and so faintly blown,
It might be echo of my own.

XX.

"Thus judging, for a little space
I listened, ere I left the place;
But scarce could trust my eyes,
Nor yet can think they served me true,
When sudden in the ring I view,
In form distinct of shape and hue,
A mounted champion rise.—
I've fought, lord lion, many a day,
In single fight and mixed affray,
And ever, I myself may say,
Have borne me as a knight;
But when this unexpected foe
Seemed starting from the gulf below,—
I care not though the truth I show,—
I trembled with affright;
And as I placed in rest my spear,
My hand so shook for very fear,
I scarce could couch it right.

XXI.

"Why need my tongue the issue tell?
We ran our course,—my charger fell;—
What could he 'gainst the shock of hell?—
I rolled upon the plain.
High o'er my head, with threatening hand,
The spectre shook his naked brand,—
Yet did the worst remain:
My dazzled eyes I upward cast,—
Not opening hell itself could blast
Their sight like what I saw!
Full on his face the moonbeam strook,—
A face could never be mistook!
I knew the stern vindictive look,
And held my breath for awe.
I saw the face of one who, fled
To foreign climes, has long been dead,—
I well believe the last;
For ne'er, from visor raised, did stare
A human warrior, with a glare
So grimly and so ghast.
Thrice o'er my head he shook the blade:
But when to good saint George I prayed,
(The first time e'er I asked his aid,)
He plunged it in the sheath;
And, on his courser mounting light,
He seemed to vanish from my sight:
The moonbeam drooped, and deepest night
Sunk down upon the heath.—

'Twere long to tell what cause I have
To know his face that met me there,
Called by his hatred from the grave,
To cumber upper air;
Dead or alive, good cause had he
To be my mortal enemy."—

XXII.

Marvelled sir David of the mount;
Then, learned in story, 'gan recount
Such chance had hap'd of old,
When once, near Norham, there did fight
A spectre fell, of fiendish might,
In likeness of a Scottish knight,
With Brian Bulmer bold,
And trained him nigh to disallow
The aid of his baptismal vow.
"And such a phantom too, 'tis said,
With highland broad-sword, targe, and plaid,
And fingers red with gore,
Is seen in Rothiemurchus' glade,
Or where the sable pine-trees shade
Dark Tomantoul, and Achnaslaid,
Dromouchty, or Glenmore.*
And yet, what'er such legends say,
Of warlike demon, host, or fay,
On mountain, moor, or plain,
Spotless in faith, in bosom bold,
True son of chivalry should hold
These midnight terrors vain;
For seldom have such spirits power
To harm, save in the evil hour,
When guilt we meditate within,
Or harbour unrepented sin."—
Lord Marmion turned him half aside,
And twice to clear his voice he tried,
Then pressed sir David's hand,—
But nought, at length, in answer said;
And here their farther converse staid,
Each ordering that his band
Should bowne them with the rising day,
To Scotland's camp to take their way,—
Such was the king's command.

XXIII.

Early they took Dun-Edin's road,
And I could trace each step they trode;
Hill, brook, nor dell, nor rock, nor stone,
Lies on the path to me unknown.
Much might it boast of storied lore;
But, passing such digression o'er,
Suffice it that their route was laid
Across the furzy hills of Braid.
They passed the glen and scanty rill,
And climbed the opposing bank, until
They gained the top of Blackford Hill.

XXIV.

Blackford! on whose uncultured breast,
Among the broom, and thorn, and whin,
A truant-boy, I sought the nest,
Or listed, as I lay at rest,
While rose, on breezes thin,
The murmur of the city crowd,
And, from his steeple jangling loud,
Saint Giles's mingling din—
Now, from the summit of the plain,
Waves all the hill with yellow grain;
And, o'er the landscape as I look,
Nought do I see unchanged remain,
Save the rude cliffs and chiming brook:
To me they make a heavy moan
Of early friendships past and gone.

XXV.

But different far the change has been,
Since Marmion, from the crown
Of Blackford, saw that martial scene
Upon the bent so brown:
Thousand pavilions, white as snow,
Spread all the Borough-moor below,[10]
Upland, and dale, and down:—
A thousand did I say? I ween,
Thousands on thousands there were seen,
That chequered all the heath between
The streamlet and the town:
In crossing ranks extending far,
Forming a camp irregular;
Oft giving way where still there stood
Some relics of the old oak wood,
That darkly huge did intervene,
And tamed the glaring white with green:
In these extended lines there lay
A martial kingdom's vast array.

XXVI.

For from Hebudes, dark with rain,
To eastern Lodon's fertile plain,
And from the southern Redswire edge
To farthest Rosse's rocky ledge;
From west to east, from south to north,
Scotland sent all her warriors forth.
Marmion might hear the mingled hum
Of myriads up the mountain come;
The horses' tramp, and tingling clank
Where chiefs reviewed their vassal rank,
And charger's shrilling neigh;
And see the shifting lines advance,
While frequent flashed, from shield and lance,
The sun's reflected ray.

XXVII.

Thin curling in the morning air,
The wreathes of falling smoke declare
To embers now the brands decayed,
Where the night-watch their fires had made.
They saw, slow rolling on the plain,
Full many a baggage-cart and wain,
And dire artillery's clumsy car,
By sluggish oxen tugged to war;
And there were Borthwick's sisters seven,*
And culverins which France had given.
Ill-omened gift! the guns remain
The conqueror's spoil on Flodden plain.

XXVIII.

Nor marked they less, where in the air
A thousand streamers flaunted fair;
Various in shape, device, and hue,
Green, sanguine, purple, red, and blue,
Broad, narrow, swallow-tailed, and square,
Scroll, pennon, pensil, bandrol,† there
O'er the pavilions flew.[11]
Highest and midmost, was descried
The royal banner floating wide:
The staff a pine-tree strong and straight,
Pitched deeply in a massive stone,
Which still in memory is shown,
Yet bent beneath the standard's weight,
Whene'er the western wind unrolled,
With toil, the huge and cumbrous fold,
And gave to view the dazzling field,
Where, in proud Scotland's royal shield,
The ruddy lion ramped in gold.[12]

* See the traditions concerning Bulmer, and the spectre called *Lham-dearg*, or Bloody-hand, in note 8. on canto III.

* Seven culverins, so called, cast by one Borthwick.

† Each of these feudal ensigns intimated the different rank of those entitled to display them.

XXIX.

Lord Marmion viewed the landscape bright,—
He viewed it with a chief's delight,—
Until within him burned his heart,
And lightning from his eye did part,
As on the battle-day;
Such glance did falcon never dart,
When stooping on his prey.
"Oh! well, lord-lion, hast thou said,
Thy king from warfare to dissuade
Were but a vain essay;
For, by St. George, were that host mine,
Not power infernal, nor divine,
Should once to peace my soul incline,
Till I had dimmed their armour's shine
In glorious battle-fray!"—
Answered the bard, of milder mood:
"Fair is the sight,—and yet 'twere good,
That kings would think withal,
When peace and wealth their land has blessed,
'Tis better to sit still at rest,
Than rise, perchance to fall."

XXX.

Still on the spot lord Marmion stayed,
For fairer scene he ne'er surveyed.
When sated with the martial show
That peopled all the plain below,
The wandering eye could o'er it go,
And mark the distant city glow
With gloomy splendour red;
For on the smoke-wreaths, huge and slow,
That round her sable turrets flow,
The morning beams were shed,
And tinged them with a lustre proud,
Like that which streaks a thunder-cloud.
Such dusky grandeur clothed the height,
Where the huge castle holds its state,
And all the steep slope down,
Whose ridgy back heaves to the sky,
Piled deep and massy, close and high,
Mine own romantic town!
But northward far, with purer blaze,
On Ochil mountains fell the rays,
And, as each heathy top they kissed,
It gleamed a purple amethyst.
Yonder the shores of Fife you saw;
Here Preston-bay, and Berwick-law;
And, broad between them rolled,
The gallant Frith the eye might note,
Whose islands on its bosom float
Like emeralds chased in gold.
Fitz-Eustace' heart felt closely pent;
As if to give his rapture vent,
The spur he to his charger lent,
And raised his bridal-hand,
And, making demi-vault in air,
Cried, "Where's the coward that would not dare
To fight for such a land!"
The lion smiled his joy to see;
Nor Marmion's frown repressed his glee.

XXXI.

Thus while they looked, a flourish proud,
Where mingled trump and clarion loud,
And fife, and kettle-drum,
And sackbut deep, and psaltery,
And war-pipe with discordant cry,
And cymbal clattering to the sky,
Making wild music bold and high,
Did up the mountain come;
The whilst the bells, with distant chime,
Merrily tolled the hour of prime,
And thus the lion spoke:—
"Thus clamoured still the war-notes when
The king to mass his way has ta'en,
Or to St. Chatherine's of Sienne,
Or chapel of St. Roeque.
To you they speak of martial fame;
But me remind of peaceful game,
When blither was their cheer,
Thrilling in Falkland woods the air,
In signal none his steed should spare,
But strive which foremost might repair
To the downfall of the deer.

XXXII.

"Nor less," he said,—"when looking forth,
I view yon empress of the north
Sit on her hilly throne;
Her palace's imperial bowers,
Her castle, proof to hostile powers,
Her stately halls and holy towers—
Nor less," he said, "I moan
To think what wo mischance may bring,
And how these merry bells may ring
The death dirge of our gallant king;
Or, with their larum, call
The burghers forth to watch and ward,
'Gainst southern sack and fires to guard
Dun-Edin's leaguered wall.—
But not for my presaging thought,
Dream conquest sure, or cheaply bought!
Lord Marmion, I say nay:—
God is the guider of the field,
He breaks the champion's spear and shield,
But thou thyself shalt say,
When joins yon host in deadly stowre,
That England's dames must weep in bower,
Her monks the death-mass sing;
For never saw'st thou such a power
Led on by such a king."
And now, down winding to the plain,
The barriers of the camp they gain,
And there they make a stay.—
There stays the minstrel, till he fling
His hand o'er every border string,
And fit his harp the pomp to sing
Of Scotland's ancient court and king,
In the succeeding lay.

INTRODUCTION TO CANTO V.

TO GEORGE ELLIS, Esq.

Edinburgh.

When dark December glooms the day,
And takes our autumn joys away;
When short and scant the sunbeam throws,
Upon the weary waste of snows,
A cold and profitless regard,
Like patron on a needy bard;
When sylvan occupation's done,
And o'er the chimney rests the gun,
And hang, in idle trophy, near,
The game-pouch, fishing-rod, and spear;
When wiry terrier, rough and grim,
And greyhound, with his length of limb,
And pointer, now employed no more,
Cumber our parlour's narrow floor;
When in his stall the impatient steed
Is long condemned to rest and feed;
When from our snow-encircled home,
Scarce cares the hardiest step to roam,
Since path is none, save that to bring
The needful water from the spring;

When wrinkled news-page, thrice conn'd o'er,
Beguiles the dreary hour no more,
And darkling politician, crossed,
Inveighs against the lingering post,
And answering housewife sore complains
Of carrier's snow-impeded wains:
When such the country cheer, I come,
Well pleased, to seek our city home;
For converse, and for books to change
The forest's melancholy range,
And welcome, with renewed delight,
The busy day and social night.

Not here need my desponding rhyme
Lament the ravages of time,
As erst by Newark's riven towers,
And Ettrick stripped of forest bowers.*
True,—Caledonia's queen is changed,[1]
Since, on her dusky summit ranged,
Within its steepy limits pent,
By bulwark, line, and battlement,
And flanking towers, and laky flood,
Guarded and garrisoned she stood,
Denying entrance or resort,
Save at each tall embattled port;
Above whose arch, suspended, hung
Portcullis spiked with iron prong.
That long is gone,—but not so long,
Since, early closed, and opening late,
Jealous revolved the studded gate,
Whose task, from eve to morning tide,
A wicket churlishly supplied.
Stern then, and steel-girt was thy brow,
Dun-Edin! O, how altered now,
When safe amid thy mountain court
Thou sit'st, like empress at her sport,
And, liberal, unconfined, and free,
Flinging thy white arms to the sea,[2]
For thy dark cloud with umbered lower,
That hung o'er cliff, and lake, and tower,
Thou gleam'st against the western ray
Ten thousand lines of brighter day.

Not she, the championess of old,
In Spenser's magic tale enrolled,—
She for the charmed spear renowned,
Which forced each knight to kiss the ground,—
Not she more changed, when placed at rest,
What time she was Malbecco's guest,†
She gave to flow her maiden vest;
When from the corslet's grasp relieved,
Free to the sight her bosom heaved;
Sweet was her blue eye's modest smile,
Erst hidden by the aventayle;
And down her shoulders graceful rolled
Her locks profuse, of paly gold.
They who whilome, in midnight fight,
Had marvelled at her matchless might,
No less her maiden charms approved,
But looking liked, and liking loved.‡
The sight could jealous pangs beguile,
And charm Malbecco's cares awhile;
And he, the wandering squire of dames,
Forgot his Columbella's claims,
And passion, erst unknown, could gain
The breast of blunt sir Satyrane;
Nor durst light Paridel advance,
Bold as he was, a looser glance.—
She charmed, at once, and tamed the heart,
Incomparable Britomarte!

So thou, fair city! disarrayed
Of battled wall, and rampart's aid,
As stately seem'st, but lovelier far
Than in that panoply of war.
Nor deem that from thy fenceless throne
Strength and security are flown;
Still, as of yore, queen of the north!
Still canst thou send thy children forth.
Ne'er readier at alarm-bell's call
Thy burghers rose to man thy wall,
Than now, in danger, shall be thine,
Thy dauntless voluntary line;
For fosse and turret proud to stand,
Their breasts the bulwarks of the land.
Thy thousands, trained to martial toil,
Full red would stain their native soil,
Ere from thy mural crown there fell
The slightest knosp, or pinnacle.
And if it come,—as come it may,
Dun-Edin! that eventful day,
Renowned for hospitable deed,
That virtue much with heaven may plead,
In patriarchal times whose care
Descending angels deigned to share;
That claim may wrestle blessings down
On those who fight for the good town,
Destined in every age to be
Refuge of injured royalty;
Since first, when conquering York arose,
To Henry meek she gave repose,[3]
Till late, with wonder, grief, and awe,
Great Bourbon's relics, sad she saw.

Truce to these thoughts!—for, as they rise,
How gladly I avert mine eyes,
Bodings, or true or false, to change,
For fiction's fair romantic range,
Or for tradition's dubious light,
That hovers 'twixt the day and night:
Dazzling alternately and dim,
Her wavering lamp I'd rather trim,
Knights, squires, and lovely dames to see,
Creation of my fantasy,
Than gaze abroad on reeky fen,
And make of mists invading men.—
Who loves not more the night of June
Than dull December's gloomy noon?
The moonlight than the fog of frost?
And can we say, which cheats the most?

But who shall teach my harp to gain
A sound of the romantic strain,
Whose Anglo-Norman tones whilere
Could win the royal Henry's ear,[4]
Famed Beauclere called, for that he loved
The minstrel, and his lay approved?
Who shall these lingering notes redeem,
Decaying on oblivion's stream;
Such notes as from the Breton tongue
Marie translated, Blondel sung?—
O! born, time's ravage to repair,
And make the dying muse thy care;
Who, when his scythe her hoary foe
Was poising for the final blow,
The weapon from his hand could wring
And break his glass, and shear his wing,
And bid, reviving in his strain,
The gentle poet live again;
Thou, who canst give to lightest lay
An unpedantic moral gay,
Nor less the dullest theme bid flit
On wings of unexpected wit;
In letters, as in life, approved,
Example honoured, and beloved,

* See Introduction to Canto II.
† See "The Fairy Queen," Book III, Canto IX.
‡ "For every one her liked, and every one her loved."
Spencer, as above.

Dear Ellis! to the bard impart
A lesson of thy magic art,
To win at once the head and heart,—
At once to charm, instruct, and mend,
My guide, my pattern, and my friend!
Such minstrel lesson to bestow
Be long thy pleasing task,—but, O!
No more by thy example teach
What few can practise, all can preach,
With even patience to endure
Lingering disease, and painful cure,
And boast affliction's pangs subdued
By mild and manly fortitude.
Enough, the lesson has been given;
Forbid the repetition, Heaven!
Come listen, then! for thou hast known,
And loved the minstrel's varying tone,
Who, like his border sires of old,
Waked a wild measure, rude and bold,
Till Windsor's oaks, and Ascot plain,
With wonder heard the northern strain.
Come, listen!—bold in thy applause,
The bard shall scorn pedantic laws,
And, as the ancient art could stain
Achievements on the storied pane,
Irregularly traced and planned,
But yet so glowing and so grand;
So shall he strive, in changeful hue,
Field, feast, and combat, to renew,
And loves, and arms, and harpers' glee,
And all the pomp of chivalry.

CANTO V.

THE COURT.

I.

The train has left the hills of Braid;
The barrier guard have open made
(So Lindesay bade) the palisade,
That closed the tented ground,
Their men the warders backward drew,
And carried pikes as they rode through,
Into its ample bound.
Fast ran the Scottish warriors there,
Upon the southern band to stare;
And envy with their wonder rose,
To see such well-appointed foes;
Such length of shafts, such mighty bows,
So huge, that many simply thought,
But for a vaunt such weapons wrought;
And little deemed their force to feel
Through links of mail, and plates of steel,
When, rattling upon Floden vale,
The cloth-yard arrows flew like hail.[5]

II.

Nor less did Marmion's skilful view
Glance every line and squadron through;
And much he marvelled one small land
Could marshal forth such various band:
For men-at-arms were here,
Heavily sheathed in mail and plate,
Like iron towers for strength and weight,
On Flemish steeds of bone and height,
With battle-axe and spear.
Young knights and squires, a lighter train,
Practised their chargers on the plain,
By aid of leg, of hand, and rein,
Each warlike feat to show;
To pass, to wheel, the croupe to gain,
And high curvett, that not in vain
The sword-sway might descend amain
On foeman's casque below.[6]

He saw the hardy burghers there
March armed, on foot, with faces bare,[7]
For visor they wore none,
Nor waving plume, nor crest of knight;
But burnished were their corslets bright,
Their brigantines, and gorgets light,
Like very silver shone.
Long pikes they had for standing fight,
Two-handed swords they wore,
And many wielded mace of weight,
And bucklers bright they bore.

III.

On foot the yeoman too,[8] but dressed
In his steel jack, a swarthy vest,
With iron quilted well;
Each at his back, (a slender store,)
His forty days' provision bore,
As feudal statutes tell.
His arms were halbert, axe, or spear,
A cross-bow there, a hagbut here,
A dagger-knife, and brand—
Sober he seemed, and sad of cheer,
As loth to leave his cottage dear,
And march to foreign strand;
Or musing, who would guide his steer,
To till the fallow land.
Yet deem not in his thoughtful eye
Did aught of dastard terror lie;—
More dreadful far his ire
Than theirs, who, scorning danger's name,
In eager mood to battle came,
Their valour like light straw on flame,
A fierce but fading fire.

IV.

Not so the borderer:—bred to war,
He knew the battle's din afar,
And joyed to hear it swell.
His peaceful day was slothful ease;
Nor harp, nor pipe, his ear could please,
Like the loud slogan yell.
On active steed, with lance and blade,
The light armed pricker plied his trade,—
Let nobles fight for fame;
Let vassals follow where they lead,
Burghers, to guard their townships, bleed,
But war's the borderers' game.
Their gain, their glory, their delight,
To sleep the day, maraud the night,
O'er mountain, moss, and moor;
Joyful to fight they took their way,
Scarce caring who might win the day,
Their booty was secure.
These, as lord Marmion's train passed by,
Looked on, at first, with careless eye,
Nor marvelled aught, well taught to know
The form and force of English bow.
But when they saw the lord arrayed
In splendid arms, and rich brocade,
Each borderer to his kinsman said,
"Hist, Ringan! seest thou there!
Canst guess which road they'll homeward ride?
O! could we but, on border side,
By Eusdale glen, or Liddell's tide,
Beset a prize so fair!
That fangless lion, too, their guide,
Might chance to lose his glistering hide;
Brown Maudlin, of that doublet pied,
Could make a kirtle rare."

V.

Next, Marmion marked the Celtic race
Of different language, form, and face,

A various race of man;
Just then the chiefs their tribes arrayed,
And wild and garish semblance made,
The chequered trews, and belted plaid;
And varying notes the war-pipes brayed,
To every varying clan;
Wild through their red or sable hair
Looked out their eyes, with savage stare,
On Marmion as he past;
Their legs above the knee were bare;
Their frame was sinewy, short, and spare,
And hardened to the blast;
Of taller race, the chiefs they own
Were by the eagle's plumage known.
The hunted red-deer's undressed hide
Their hairy buskins well supplied;
The graceful bonnet decked their head;
Back from their shoulders hung the plaid;
A broad-sword of unwieldy length,
A dagger proved for edge and strength,
A studded targe they wore,
And quivers, bows, and shafts,—but, O!
Short was the shaft, and weak the bow,
To that which England bore.
The Isles-men carried at their backs
The ancient Danish battle-axe.
They raised a wild and wondering cry,
As with his guide rode Marmion by.
Loud were their clamouring tongues, as when
The clanging sea-fowl leave the fen,
And, with their cries discordant mixed,
Grumbled and yelled the pipes betwixt.

VI.

Thus through the Scottish camp they passed,
And reached the city gate at last,
Where all around, a wakeful guard,
Armed burghers kept their watch and ward.
Well had they cause of jealous fear,
When lay encamped, in field so near,
The borderer and the mountaineer.
As through the bustling streets they go,
All was alive with martial show;
At every turn, with dinning clang,
The armourer's anvil clashed and rang,
Or toiled the swarthy smith, to wheel
The bar that arms the charger's heel;
Or axe, or falchion to the side
Of jarring grindstone was applied.
Page, groom, and squire, with hurrying pace,
Through street, and lane, and market-place,
Bore lance, or casque, or sword;
While burghers, with important face,
Described each new-come lord,
Discussed his lineage, told his name,
His following,* and his warlike fame.—
The lion led to lodging meet,
Which high o'erlooked the crowded street;
There must the baron rest,
Till past the hour of vesper tide,
And then to Holy-Rood must ride,—
Such was the king's behest.
Meanwhile the lion's care assigns
A banquet rich, and costly wines,[9]
To Marmion and his train;
And when the appointed hour succeeds,
The baron dons his peaceful weeds,
And following Lindesay as he leads,
The palace halls they gain.

* *Following*—Feudal retainers.

VII.

Old Holy-Rood rung merrily,
That night, with wassel, mirth, and glee:
King James within her princely bower
Feasted the chiefs of Scotland's power,
Summoned to spend the parting hour;
For he had charged, that his array
Should southward march by break of day.
Well loved that splendid monarch aye
The banquet and the song,
By day the tourney, and by night
The merry dance, traced fast and light,
The masquers quaint, the pageant bright,
The revel loud and long.
This feast outshone his banquets past;
It was his blithest,—and his last.
The dazzling lamps, from gallery gay,
Cast on the court a dancing ray;
Here to the harp did minstrels sing;
There ladies touched a softer string;
With long-eared cap, and motley vest,
The licensed fool retailed his jest;
His magic tricks the juggler plied;
At dice and draughts the gallants vied;
While some, in close recess apart,
Courted the ladies of their heart,
Nor courted them in vain;
For often, in the parting hour,
Victorious love asserts his power
O'er coldness and disdain;
And flinty is her heart, can view
To battle march a lover true,—
Can hear, perchance, his last adieu,
Nor own her share of pain.

VIII.

Through this mixed crowd of glee and game,
The king to greet lord Marmion came,
While, reverend, all made room.
An easy task it was, I trow,
King James's manly form to know,
Although, his courtesy to show,
He doffed, to Marmion bending low,
His broidered cap and plume.
For royal were his garb and mien,
His cloak, of crimson velvet piled,
Trimmed with the fur of martin wild;
His vest of changeful satin sheen,
The dazzled eye beguiled;
His gorgeous collar hung adown,
Wrought with the badge of Scotland's crown,
The thistle brave, of old renown;
His trusty blade, Toledo right,
Descended from a baldric bright;
White were his buskins, on the heel
His spurs inlaid of gold and steel;
His bonnet, all of crimson fair,
Was buttoned with a ruby rare:
And Marmion deemed he ne'er had seen
A prince of such a noble mien.

IX.

The monarch's form was middle size;
For feat of strength, or exercise,
Shaped in proportion fair;
And hazel was his eagle eye,
And auburn of the deepest dye
His short curled beard and hair.
Light was his footstep in the dance,
And firm his stirrup in the lists;
And, oh! he had that merry glance
That seldom lady's heart resists.

Lightly from fair to fair he flew,
And loved to plead, lament, and sue;—
Suit lightly won, and short-lived pain,
For Monarchs seldom sigh in vain.
I said he joyed in banquet-bower;
But, mid his mirth, 'twas often strange,
How suddenly his cheer would change,
His look o'ercast and lower,
If, in a sudden turn, he felt
The pressure of his iron belt,
That bound his breast in penance pain,
In memory of his father slain.[10]
Even so 'twas strange how evermore,
Soon as the passing pang was o'er,
Forward he rushed, with double glee,
Into the stream of revelry:
Thus, dim-seen object of affright
Startles the courser in his flight,
And half he halts, half springs aside;
But feels the quickening spur applied,
And, straining on the tightened rein,
Scours doubly swift o'er hill and plain.

X.

O'er James's heart, the courtiers say,
Sir Hugh the heron's wife held sway:[11]
To Scotland's court she came,
To be a hostage for her lord,
Who Cessford's gallant heart had gored,
And with the king to make accord,
Had sent his lovely dame.
Nor to that lady free alone
Did the gay king allegiance own;
For the fair queen of France
Sent him a Turquois ring, and glove,
And charged him, as her knight and love,
For her to break a lance;[12]
And strike three strokes with Scottish braud,
And march three miles on southron land,
And bid the banners of his band
In English breezes dance.
And thus, for France's queen he drest
His manly limbs in mailed vest;
And thus admitted English fair,
His inmost counsels still to share;
And thus, for both, he madly planned
The ruin of himself and land!
And yet, the sooth to tell,
Nor England's fair, nor France's queen,
Were worth one pearl-drop bright and sheen,
From Margaret's eyes that fell,—
His own queen Margaret, who, in Lithgow's bower,
All lonely sat, and wept the weary hour.

XI.

The queen sits lone in Lithgow pile,
And weeps the weary day,
The war against her native soil,
Her monarch's risk in battle broil;—
And in gay Holy Rood, the while,
Dame Heron rises with a smile
Upon the harp to play.
Fair was her rounded arm, as o'er
The strings her fingers flew;
And as she touched, and tuned them all,
Ever her bosom's rise and fall
Was plainer given to view;
For all, for heat, was laid aside,
Her wimple, and her hood untied.
And first she pitched her voice to sing,
Then glanced her dark eye on the king,
And then around the silent ring;
And laughed, and blushed, and oft did say
Her pretty oath, by yea and nay,
She could not, would not, durst not play!
At length, upon the harp, with glee,
Mingled with arch simplicity,
A soft, yet lively air she rung,
While thus the wily lady sung.

XII.

LOCHINVAR.

LADY HERON'S SONG.

O, young Lochinvar is come out of the west,
Through all the wide border his steed was the best;
And save his good broadsword he weapons had none,
He rode all unarmed, and he rode all alone.
So faithful in love, and so dauntless in war,
There never was knight like the young Lochinvar.

He staid not for brake, and he stopped not for stone,
He swam the Eske river where ford there was none;
But, ere he alighted at Netherby gate,
The bride had consented, the gallant came late:
For a laggard in love, and a dastard in war,
Was to wed the fair Ellen of brave Lochinvar.

So boldly he entered the Netherby hall,
Among bride's-men, and kinsmen, and brothers, and all:
Then spoke the bride's father, his hand on his sword,
(For the poor craven bridegroom said never a word,)
"O come ye in peace here, or come ye in war,
Or to dance at our bridal, young lord Lochinvar?"

"I long woo'd your daughter, my suit you denied;
Love swells like the Solway, but ebbs like its tide;
And now am I come, with this lost love of mine,
To lead but one measure, drink one cup of wine.
There are maidens in Scotland, more lovely by far,
That would gladly be bride to the young Lochinvar."

The bride kissed the goblet; the knight took it up,
He quaffed off the wine, and he threw down the cup.
She looked down to blush, and she looked up to sigh,
With a smile on her lips, and a tear in her eye.
He took her soft hand, ere her mother could bar,—
"Now tread we a measure!" said young Lochinvar.

So stately his form, and so lovely his face,
That never a hall such a galliard did grace;
While her mother did fret, and her father did fume,
And the bridegroom stood dangling his bonnet and plume;
And the bride-maidens whispered, "'Twere better by far
To have matched our fair cousin with young Lochinvar."

One touch to her hand, and one word in her ear,
When they reached the hall-door, and the charger stood near;
So light to the croupe the fair lady he swung,
So light to the saddle before her he sprung!—
"She is won! we are gone, over bank, bush, and scaur;
They'll have fleet steeds that follow," quoth young Lochinvar.

There was mounting 'mong Græmes of the Netherby clan;
Forsters, Fenwicks, and Musgraves, they rode and they ran:
There was racing and chasing, on Cannobie Lee,
But the lost bride of Netherby ne'er did they see.
So daring in love, and so dauntless in war,
Have ye e'er heard of gallant like young Lochinvar?

XIII.

The monarch o'er the syren hung,
And beat the measure as she sung;
And, pressing closer, and more near,
He whispered praises in her ear.
In loud applause, the courtiers vied;
And ladies winked, and spoke aside.
The witching dame to Marmion threw
A glance, where seemed to reign
The pride that claims applauses due,
And of her royal conquest, too,
A real or feigned disdain:
Familiar was the look, and told,
Marmion and she were friends of old.
The king observed their meeting eyes,
With something like displeased surprise;
For monarchs ill can rivals brook,
Even in a word, or smile, or look.
Straight took he forth the parchment broad,
Which Marmion's high commission showed:
"Our borders sacked by many a raid,
Our peaceful liegemen robbed," he said;
"On day of truce our warden slain,
Stout Barton killed, his vessels ta'en—
Unworthy were we here to reign,
Should these for vengeance cry in vain;
Our full defiance, hate, and scorn,
Our herald has to Henry borne."

XIV.

He paused, and led where Douglas stood,
And with stern eye the pageant viewed:
I mean that Douglas, sixth of yore,
Who coronet of Angus bore,
And, when his blood and heart were high,
Did the third James in camp defy,
And all his minions led to die
On Lauder's dreary flat:
Princes and favourites long grew tame,
And trembled at the homely name
Of Archibald Bell-the-cat;[13]
The same who left the dusky vale
Of Hermitage in Liddesdale,
Its dungeons, and its towers,
Where Bothwell's turrets brave the air,
And Bothwell bank is blooming fair,
To fix his princely bowers.
Though now, in age, he had laid down
His armour for the peaceful gown,
And for a staff his brand;
Yet often would flash forth the fire,
That could, in youth, a monarch's ire
And minion's pride withstand;
And even that day, at council board,
Unapt to sooth his sovereign's mood,
Against the war had Angus stood,
And chafed his royal lord.[14]

XV.

His giant-form, like ruined tower,
Though fallen its muscles' brawny vaunt,
Huge-boned, and tall, and grim, and gaunt,
Seemed o'er the gaudy scene to lower:
His locks and beard in silver grew;
His eyebrows kept their sable hue.
Near Douglas when the monarch stood,
His bitter speech he thus pursued:—
"Lord Marmion, since these letters say,
That in the north you needs must stay,
While slightest hopes of peace remain,
Uncourteous speech it were, and stern,
To say—Return to Lindisfarn,
Until my herald come again.—
Then rest you in Tantallon hold;[15]
Your host shall be the Douglas bold,—
A chief unlike his sires of old.
He wears their motto on his blade,[16]
Their blazon o'er his towers displayed;
Yet loves his sovereign to oppose,
More than to face his country's foes.
And, I bethink me, by St. Stephen,
But e'en this morn to me was given
A prize, the first fruits of the war,
Ta'en by a galley from Dunbar,
A bevy of the maids of heaven.
Under your guard, these holy maids
Shall safe return to cloister shades,
And, while they at Tantallon stay,
Requiem for Cochran's soul may say."
And, with the slaughtered favourite name,
Across the monarch's brow there came
A cloud of ire, remorse, and shame.

XVI.

In answer nought could Angus speak;
His proud heart swelled well nigh to break
He turned aside, and down his cheek
A burning tear there stole.
His hand the monarch sudden took,
That sight his kind heart could not brook;
"Now, by the Bruce's soul,
Angus, my hasty speech forgive!
For sure as doth his spirit live,
As he said of the Douglas old,
I well may say of you,—
That never king did subject hold,
In speech more free, in war more bold,
More tender, and more true;*
Forgive me, Douglas, once again."—
And, while the king his hand did strain,
The old man's tears fell down like rain.
To sieze the moment Marmion tried,
And whispered to the king aside:
"Oh! let such tears unwonted plead
For respite short from dubious deed!
A child will weep a bramble's smart,
A maid to see her sparrow part,
A stripling for a woman's heart·
But wo awaits a country, when
She sees the tears of bearded men.
Then, oh! what omen, dark and high,
When Douglas wets his manly eye!"—

XVII.

Displeased was James, that stranger viewed
And tampered with his changing mood.
"Laugh those that can, weep those that may,"
Thus did the fiery monarch say,
"Southward I march by break of day;
And if within Tantallon strong,
The good lord Marmion tarries long,
Perchance our meeting next may fall
At Tamworth, in his castle-hall."—
The haughty Marmion felt the taunt,
And answered, grave, the royal vaunt:

* O, Dowglas! Dowglas!
Tendir and trew. *The Houlate.*

"Much honoured were my humble home,
If in its halls king James should come;
But Nottingham has archers good,
And Yorkshire men are stern of mood;
Northumbrian prickers wild and rude.
On Derby hills the paths are steep;
In Ouse and Tyne the fords are deep:
And many a banner will be torn,
And many a knight to earth be borne,
And many a sheaf of arrows spent,
Ere Scotland's king shall cross the Trent:
Yet pause, brave prince, while yet you may."
The monarch lightly turned away,
And to his nobles loud did call,—
"Lords, to the dance,—a hall! a hall!"*
Himself his cloak and sword flung by,
And led dame Heron gallantly;
And minstrels, at the royal order,
Rung out—"Blue bonnets o'er the border."

XVIII.

Leave we these revels now, to tell
What to St. Hilda's maids befel,
Whose galley, as they sailed again
To Whitby, by a Scot was ta'en.
Now at Dun-Edin did they bide,
Till James should of their fate decide;
And soon, by his command,
Were gently summoned to prepare
To journey under Marmion's care,
As escort honoured, safe, and fair,
Again to English land.
The abbess told her chaplet o'er,
Nor knew which saint she should implore;
For, when she thought of Constance, sore
She feared lord Marmion's mood.
And judge what Clara must have felt!
The sword, that hung in Marmion's belt,
Had drunk De Wilton's blood.
Unwittingly, king James had given,
As guard to Whitby's shades,
The man most dreaded under heaven
By these defenceless maids;
Yet what petition could avail,
Or who would listen to the tale
Of woman, prisoner, and nun,
Mid bustle of a war begun?
They deemed it hopeless to avoid
The convoy of their dangerous guide.

XIX.

Their lodging, so the king assigned,
To Marmion's, as their guardian, joined;
And thus it fell, that, passing nigh,
The palmer caught the abbess' eye,
Who warned him by a scroll,
She had a secret to reveal,
That much concerned the church's weal,
And health of sinner's soul;
And with deep charge of secrecy,
She named a place to meet,
Within an open balcony,
That hung from dizzy pitch, and high,
Above the stately street;
To which, as common to each home,
At night they might in secret come.

XX.

At night, in secret, there they came,
The palmer and the holy dame.
The moon among the clouds rode high,
And all the city hum was by.
Upon the street, where late before
Did din of war and warriors roar,
You might have heard a pebble fall,
A beetle hum, a cricket sing,
An owlet flap his boding wing
On Giles's steeple tall.
The antique buildings, climbing high,
Whose Gothic frontlets sought the sky,
Were here wrapt deep in shade;
There on their brows the moonbeam broke
Through the faint wreaths of silvery smoke,
And on the casements played.
And other light was none to see,
Save torches gliding far,
Before some chieftain of degree,
Who left the royal revelry
To bowne him for the war.—
A solemn scene the abbess chose!
A solemn hour, her secret to disclose.

XXI.

"O, holy palmer!" she began,—
"For sure he must be sainted man,
Whose blessed feet have trod the ground
Where the Redeemer's tomb is found;—
For his dear church's sake, my tale
Attend, nor deem of light avail,
Though I must speak of worldly love,—
How vain to those who wed above!
De Wilton and lord Marmion woo'd
Clara de Clare, of Gloster's blood;
(Idle it were of Whitby's dame,
To say of that same blood I came;)
And once, when jealous rage was high,
Lord Marmion said despiteously,
Wilton was traitor in his heart,
And had made league with Martin Swart,[17]
When he came here on Simnel's part;
And only cowardice did restrain
His rebel aid on Stokefield's plain,—
And down he threw his glove:—the thing
Was tried, as wont, before the king;
Where frankly did De Wilton own,
That Swart in Guelders he had known;
And that between them then there went
Some scroll of courteous compliment.
For this he to his castle sent;
But when his messenger returned,
Judge how De Wilton's fury burned!
For in his packet there were laid
Letters that claimed disloyal aid,
And proved king Henry's cause betrayed.
His fame thus blighted, in the field
He strove to clear, by spear and shield;—
To clear his fame in vain he strove,
For wondrous are His ways above!
Perchance some form was unobserved:
Perchance in prayer, or faith, he swerved;[18]
Else how could guiltless champion quail,
Or how the blessed ordeal fail?

XXII.

"His squire, who now De Wilton saw
As recreant doomed to suffer law,
Repentant, owned in vain,
That, while he had the scrolls in care,
A stranger maiden, passing fair,
Had drenched him with a beverage rare;
His words no faith could gain.
With Clare alone he credence won,
Who, rather than wed Marmion,
Did to Saint Hilda's shrine repair,
To give our house her livings fair,
And die a vestal vot'ress there—

* The ancient cry to make room for a dance, or pageant.

The impulse from the earth was given,
But bent her to the paths of heaven.
A purer heart, a lovelier maid,
Ne'er sheltered her in Whitby's shade,
No, not since Saxon Edelfled;
Only one trace of earthly stain,
That for her lover's loss
She cherishes a sorrow vain,
And murmurs at the cross.—
And then her heritage,—it goes
Along the banks of Tame;
Deep fields of grain the reaper mows,
In meadows rich the heifer lows,
The falconer, and huntsman, knows
Its woodlands for the game.
Shame were it to saint Hilda dear,
And I, her humble vot'ress here,
Should do a deadly sin.
Her temple spoiled before mine eyes,
If this false Marmion such a prize
By my consent should win;
Yet hath our boisterous monarch sworn,
That Clare shall from our house be torn:
And grievous cause have I to fear,
Such mandate doth lord Marmion bear.

XXIII.

"Now, prisoner, helpless, and betrayed
To evil power, I claim thine aid,
By every step that thou hast trod
To holy shrine, and grotto dim,
By every martyr's tortured limb,
By angel, saint, and seraphim,
And by the church of God!
For mark:—When Wilton was betrayed,
And with his squire forged letters laid,
She was, alas! that sinful maid,
By whom the deed was done,—
O! shame and horror to be said,
She was—a perjured nun!
No clerk in all the land, like her,
Traced quaint and varying character.
Perchance you may a marvel deem,
That Marmion's paramour
(For such vile thing she was) should scheme
Her lover's nuptial hour;
But o'er him thus she hoped to gain,
As privy to his honour's stain,
Illimitable power.
For this she secretly retained
Each proof that might the plot reveal,
Instructions with his hand and seal:
And thus saint Hilda deigned,
Through sinner's perfidy impure,
Her house's glory to secure,
And Clare's immortal weal.

XXIV.

"'Twere long, and needless, here to tell,
How to my hand these papers fell;
With me they must not stay.
Saint Hilda keep her abbess true!
Who knows what outrage he might do,
While journeying by the way?—
O blessed saint, if e'er again
I venturous leave thy calm domain,
To travel or by land or main,
Deep penance may I pay!
Now, saintly palmer, mark my prayer;
I give this packet to thy care,
For thee to stop they will not dare;
And, O! with cautious speed!
To Wolsey's hand the papers bring,
That he may show them to the king;
And, for thy well-earned meed,
Thou holy man, at Whitby's shrine
A weekly mass shall still be thine,
While priests can sing and read.—
What ail'st thou?—Speak!"—For as he took
The charge, a strong emotion shook
His frame; and, ere reply,
They heard a faint, yet shrilly tone,
Like distant clarion feebly blown,
That on the breeze did die;
And loud the abbess shrieked in fear,
"Saint Withold save us!—What is here?
Look at yon city cross!
See on its battled tower appear
Phantoms, that scutcheons seem to rear,
And blazoned banners toss!"

XXV.

Dun-Edin's cross,[19] a pillared stone,
Rose on a turret octagon;
(But now is razed that monument,
Whence royal edict rang,
And voice of Scotland's law was sent
In glorious trumpet clang.
O! be his tomb as lead to lead,
Upon its dull destroyer's head!—
A minstrel's malison* is said.—)
Then on its battlements they saw
A vision, passing nature's law,
Strange, wild, and dimly seen;
Figures that seemed to rise and die,
Glober and sign, advance and fly,
While nought confirmed could ear or eye
Discern of sound or mien.
Yet darkly did it seem, as there
Heralds and pursuivants prepare,
With trumpet sound, and blazoned fair,
A summons to proclaim;
But indistinct the pageant proud,
As fancy forms of midnight cloud,
When flings the moon upon her shroud
A wavering tinge of flame;
It flits, expands, and shifts, till loud,
From midmost of the spectre crowd,
This awful summons came:[20]

XXVI.

"Prince, prelate, potentate, and peer,
Whose names I now shall call,
Scottish, or foreigner, give ear!
Subjects of him who sent me here,
At his tribunal to appear,
I summon one and all:
I cite you by each deadly sin,
That e'er hath soiled your hearts within;
I cite you by each brutal lust,
That e'er defiled your earthly dust,—
By wrath, by pride, by fear,
By each o'er-mastering passion's tone,
By the dark grave, and dying groan!
When forty days are past and gone,
I cite you, at your monarch's throne,
To answer and appear."—
Then thundered forth a roll of names:
The first was thine, unhappy James!
Then all thy nobles came;
Crawford, Glencairn, Montrose, Argyle,
Ross, Bothwell, Forbes, Lennox, Lyle,—
Why should I tell their separate style?
Each chief of birth and fame,

* *i. e.* Curse.

Of lowland, highland, border, isle,
Fore-doomed to Flodden's carnage pile,
Was cited there by name;
And Marmion, lord of Fontenaye,
Of Lutterward, and Scrivelbay,
De Wilton, erst of Aberley,
The self-same thundering voice did say,—
But then another spoke:
"Thy fatal summons I deny,
And thine infernal lord defy,
Appealing me to Him on high,
Who burst the sinner's yoke."
At that dread accent, with a scream,
Parted the pageant like a dream,
The summoner was gone.
Prone on her face the abbess fell,
And fast, and fast, her beads did tell;
Her nuns came, startled by the yell,
And found her there alone.
She marked not, at the scene aghast,
What time, or how, the palmer passed.

XXVII.

Shift we the scene.—The camp doth move,
Dun-Edin's streets are empty now,
Save when, for weal of those they love,
To pray the prayer, and vow the vow,
The tottering child, the anxious fair,
The gray-haired sire, with pious care,
To chapels and to shrines repair.—
Where is the palmer now? and where
The abbess, Marmion, and Clare!—
Bold Douglas! to Tantallon fair
They journey in thy charge:
Lord Marmion rode on his right hand,
The palmer still was with the band;
Angus, like Lindesay, did command,
That none should roam at large.
But in that palmer's altered mien
A wonderous change might now be seen;
Freely he spoke of war,
Of marvels wrought by single hand,
When lifted for a native land;
And still looked high, as if he planned
Some desperate deed afar.
His courser would he feed and stroke,
And, tucking up his sable frock,
Would first his metal bold provoke,
Then sooth or quell his pride.
Old Hubert said, that never one
He saw, except lord Marmion,
A steed so fairly ride.

XXVIII.

Some half-hour's march behind, there came,
By Eustace governed fair,
A troop escorting Hilda's dame,
With all her nuns, and Clare.
No audience had lord Marmion sought;
Ever he feared to aggravate
Clara de Clare's suspicious hate;
And safer 'twas, he thought,
To wait till, from the nuns removed,
The influence of kinsmen loved,
And suit by Henry's self approved,
Her slow consent had wrought.
His was no flickering flame, that dies
Unless when fanned by looks and sighs,
And lighted oft at lady's eyes;
He longed to stretch his wide command
O'er luckless Clara's ample land:
Besides, when Wilton with him vied,
Although the pang of humbled pride
The place of jealousy supplied,
Yet conquest, by that meanness won,
He almost lothed to think upon,
Led him, at times, to hate the cause
Which made him burst through honour's laws.
If e'er he loved, 'twas her alone,
Who died within that vault of stone.

XXIX.

And now, when close at hand they saw
North-Berwick's town, and lofty Law,
Fitz-Eustace bade them pause awhile
Before a venerable pile,[21]
Whose turrets viewed afar
The lofty Bass, the Lambie Isle,
The ocean's peace or war.
At tolling of a bell, forth came
The convent's venerable dame,
And prayed saint Hilda's abbess rest
With her, a loved and honoured guest,
Till Douglas should a bark prepare,
To waft her back to Whitby fair.
Glad was the abbess, you may guess,
And thanked the Scottish prioress:
And tedious 'twere to tell, I ween,
The courteous speech that passed between.
O'erjoyed the nuns their palfreys leave;
But when fair Clara did intend,
Like them, from horseback to descend,
Fitz-Eustace said,—"I grieve,
Fair lady, grieve e'en from my heart,
Such gentle company to part;—
Think not discourtesy,
But lords' commands must be obeyed;
And Marmion and the Douglas said,
That you must wend with me.
Lord Marmion hath a letter broad,
Which to the Scottish earl he showed,
Commanding, that beneath his care,
Without delay, you shall repair
To your good kinsman, lord Fitz-Clare."

XXX.

The startled abbess loud exclaimed;
But she, at whom the blow was aimed,
Grew pale as death, and cold as lead;—
She deemed she heard her death-doom read
"Cheer thee, my child!" the abbess said,
"They dare not tare thee from my hand,
To ride alone with armed band."—
"Nay, holy mother, nay,"
Fitz-Eustace said, "the lovely Clare
Will be in lady Angus' care,
In Scotland while we stay;
And, when we move, an easy ride
Will bring us to the English side,
Female attendants to provide
Befitting Gloster's heir;
Nor thinks, nor dreams, my noble lord,
By slightest look, or act, or word,
To harass lady Clare;
Her faithful guardian he will be,
Nor sue for slightest courtesy
That even to stranger falls,
Till he shall place her, safe and free,
Within her kinsman's halls."
He spoke, and blushed with earnest grace;
His faith was painted on his face,
And Clare's worst fear relieved.
The lady abbess loud exclaimed
On Henry, and the Douglas blamed,

Entreated, threatened, grieved;
To martyr, saint, and prophet prayed,
Against lord Marmion inveighed,
And called the prioress to aid,
To curse with candle, bell, and book.—
Her head the grave Cistertian shook:
"The Douglas and the king," she said,
"In their commands will be obeyed;
Grieve not, nor dream that harm can fall
The maiden in Tantallon hall."

XXXI.

The abbess, seeing strife was vain,
Assumed her wonted state again,—
For much of state she had,—
Composed her veil, and raised her head,
And—"Bid," in solemn voice she said,
"Thy master, bold and bad,
The records of his house turn o'er,
And, when he there shall written see,
That one of his own ancestry
Drove the monks forth of Coventry,[22]
Bid him his fate explore!
Prancing in pride of earthly trust,
His charger hurled him to the dust,
And, by a base plebeian thurst,
He died his hand before.
God judge 'twixt Marmion and me;
He is a chief of high degree,
And I a poor recluse;
Yet oft, in holy writ, we see
Even such weak minister as me
May the oppressor bruise:
For thus, inspired, did Judith slay
The mighty in his sin,
And Jael thus, and Deborah,"—
Here hasty Blount broke in:
"Fitz-Eustace, we must march our band;
St. Anton' fire thee! wilt thou stand
All day, with bonnet in thy hand,
To hear the lady preach?
By this good light! if thus we stay,
Lord Marmion, for our fond delay,
Will sharper sermon teach.
Come, don thy cap, and mount thy horse;
The dame must patience take perforce."—

XXXII.

"Submit we then to force," said Clare;
"But let this barbarous lord despair
His purposed aim to win;
Let him take living, land, and life;
But to be Marmion's wedded wife
In me were deadly sin:
And if it be the king's decree,
That I must find no sanctuary,
Where even a homicide might come,
And safely rest his head,
Though at its open portals stood,
Thirsting to pour forth blood for blood,
The kinsman of the dead,—
Yet one asylum is my own,
Against the dreaded hour;
A low, a silent, and a lone,
Where kings have little power.
One victim is before me there.—
Mother, your blessing, and in prayer
Remember your unhappy Clare!"—
Loud weeps the abbess, and bestows
Kind blessings many a one;
Weeping and wailing loud arose
Round patient Clare, the clamorous woes
Of every simple nun.
His eyes the gentle Eustace dried,
And scarce rude Blount the sight could bide.
Then took the squire her rein,
And gently led away her steed,
And, by each courteous word and deed,
To cheer her strove in vain.

XXXIII.

But scant three miles the band had rode,
When o'er a height they passed,
And, sudden, close before them showed
His towers, Tantallon vast;
Broad, massive, high, and stretching far,
And held impregnable in war.
On a projecting rock they rose,
And round three sides the ocean flows;
The fourth did battled walls enclose,
And double mound and fosse.
By narrow draw-bridge, outworks strong,
Through studded gates, an entrance long
To the main court they cross.
It was a wide and stately square:
Around were lodgings fit and fair,
And towers of various form,
Which on the court projected far,
And broke its lines quadrangular.
Here was square keep, there turret high,
Or pinnacle that sought the sky,
Whence oft the warder should descry
The gathering ocean-storm.

XXXIV.

Here did they rest.—The princely care
Of Douglas, why should I declare,
Or say they met reception fair?
Or why the tiding say,
Which, varying, to Tantallon came,
By hurrying posts or fleeter fame,
With every varying day?
And, first, they heard king James had won
Etal, and Wark, and Ford; and then,
That Norham castle strong was ta'en.
At that sore marvelled Marmion;—
And Douglas hoped his monarch's hand
Would soon subdue Northumberland:
But whispered news there came,
That, while his host inactive lay,
And melted by degrees away,
King James was dallying off the day
With Heron's wily dame.
Such acts to chronicles I yield;
Go seek them there, and see:
Mine is a tale of Flodden field,
And not a history.—
At length they heard the Scottish host
On that high ridge had made their post,
Which frowns o'er Millfield plain;
And that brave Surrey many a band
Had gathered in the southern land,
And marched into Northumberland,
And camp at Wooler ta'en.
Marmion, like charger in the stall,
That hears, without, the trumpet-call,
Began to chafe and swear:
"A sorry thing to hide my head
In castle like a fearful maid,
When such a field is near!
Needs must I see this battle-day:
Death to my fame, if such a fray
Were fought, and Marmion away!
The Douglas too, I wot not why,
Hath 'bated of his courtesy:
No longer in his halls I'll stay."—

Then bade his band they should array
For march against the dawning day.

INTRODUCTION TO CANTO VI.

TO RICHARD HEBER, Esq.

Mertoun-House, Christmas.

Heap on more wood!—the wind is chill;
But, let it whistle as it will,
We'll keep our Christmas merry still.
Each age has deemed the new-born year
The fittest time for festal cheer:
Even, heathen yet, the savage Dane
At Iol[1] more deep the mead did drain;
High on the beach his galleys drew,
And feasted all his pirate crew;
Then in his low and pine-built hall,
Where shields and axes decked the wall,
They gorged upon the half-dressed steer;
Caroused in seas of sable beer;
While round, in brutal jest, were thrown
The half-gnawed rib, and marrow-bone;
Or listened all, in grim delight,
While scalds yelled out the joys of fight.
Then forth, in frenzy, would they hie,
While wildly loose their red locks fly,
And, dancing round the blazing pile,
They make such barbarous mirth the while,
As best might to the mind recal
The boisterous joys of Odin's hall.
And well our christian sires of old
Loved when the year its course had rolled,
And brought blith Christmas back again,
With all his hospitable train.
Domestic and religious rite
Gave honour to the holy night:
On Christmas eve the bells were rung;
On Christmas eve the mass was sung:[2]
That only night, in all the year,
Saw the stoled priest the chalice rear.
The damsel donned her kirtle sheen;
The hall was dressed with holy green;
Forth to the wood did merry-men go,
To gather in the misletoe.
Then opened wide the baron's hall
To vassal, tenant, serf, and all;
Power laid his rod of rule aside,
And ceremony doffed her pride.
The heir, with roses in his shoes,
That night might village partner choose;
The lord, underogating, share
The vulgar game of "post and pair."
All hailed, with uncontrolled delight,
And general voice, the happy night,
That to the cottage, as the crown,
Brought tidings of salvation down.
The fire, with well-dried logs supplied,
Went roaring up the chimney wide;
The huge hall-table's oaken face,
Scrubbed till it shone, the day to grace,
Bore then upon its massive board
No mark to part the squire and lord.
Then was brought in the lusty brawn,
By old blue-coated serving-man;
Then the grim boar's-head frowned on high,
Crested with bays and rosemary.
Well can the green-garbed ranger tell,
How, when, and where, the monster fell;
What dogs before his death he tore,
And all the baiting of the boar.
The wassel round, in good brown bowls,
Garnished with ribbons, blithly trowls.
There the huge sirloin reeked; hard by
Plum-porridge stood, and Christmas pie;
Nor failed old Scotland to produce,
At such high-tide, her savoury goose.
Then came the merry masquers in,
And carols roared with blithsome din;
If unmelodious was the song,
It was a hearty note, and strong.
Who lists may in their mumming see
Traces of ancient mystery;[3]
While shirts supplied the masquerade,
And smutted cheeks the visors made;
But, O! what masquers, richly dight
Can boast of bosoms half so light!
England was merry England, when
Old Christmas brought his sports again.
'Twas Christmas broached the mightiest ale;
'Twas Christmas told the merriest tale;
A Christmas gambol oft could cheer
The poor man's heart through half the year.
Still linger in our northern clime
Some remnants of the good old time;
And still, within our valleys here
We hold the kindred title dear,
Even when, perchance, its far-fetched claim
To southern ear sounds empty name;
For course of blood, our proverbs deem,
Is warmer than the mountain-stream.*
And thus my Christmas still I hold
Where my great-grandsire came of old,
With amber beard, and flaxen hair,[4]
And reverend, apostolic air,
The feast and holy-tide to share,
And mix sobriety with wine,
And honest mirth with thoughts divine;
Small thought was his, in after time,
E'er to be hitched into a rhyme.
The simple sire could only boast
That he was loyal to his cost;
The banished race of kings revered,
And lost his land,—but kept his beard.
In these dear halls, where welcome kind
Is with fair liberty combined;
Where cordial friendship gives the hand,
And flies constraint the magic wand
Of the fair dame that rules the land,
Little we heed the tempest drear,
While music, mirth, and social cheer,
Speed on their wings the passing year.
And Mertoun's halls are fair e'en now,
When not a leaf is on the bough.
Tweed loves them well, and turns again,
As loath to leave the sweet domain,
And holds his mirror to her face,
And clasps her with a close embrace:—
Gladly as he, we seek the dome,
And as reluctant turns us home.
How just, that, at this time of glee,
My thoughts should, Heber, turn to thee!
For many a merry hour we've known,
And heard the chimes of midnight's tone.
Cease, then, my friend! a moment cease,
And leave these classic tomes in peace!
Of Roman and of Grecian lore
Sure mortal brain can hold no more.
These ancients, as Noll Bluff might say,
"Were pretty fellows in their day:"†

* "Blood is warmer than water,"—a proverb meant to vindicate our family predilections.

† "Hannibal was a pretty fellow, sir—a very pretty fellow in his day."—*Old Bachelor.*

But time and tide o'er all prevail—
On Christmas eve a Christmas tale—
Of wonder and of war.—"Profane!
What! leave the lofty Latian strain,
Her stately prose, her verse's charms,
To hear the clash of rusty arms;
In fairy land or limbo lost,
To jostle conjuror and ghost,
Goblin and witch!"—Nay, Heber dear,
Before you touch my charter, hear;
Though Leyden aids, alas! no more
My cause with many-languaged lore,
This may I say:—in realms of death
Ulysses meets Alcides' *wraith;*
Æneas, upon Thracia's shore,
The ghost of murdered Polydore;
For omens, we in Livy cross,
At every turn, *locutus bos.*
As grave and truly speaks that ox,
As if he told the price of stocks;
Or held, in Rome republican,
The place of common-councilman.

All nations have their omens drear,
Their legends wild of wo and fear.
To Cambria look—the peasant see,
Bethink him of Glendowerdy,
And shun "the spirit's blasted tree."[5]
The highlander, whose red claymore
The battle turned on Maida's shore,
Will, on a Friday morn, look pale,
If asked to tell a fairy tale;[6]
He fears the vengeful elfin king,
Who leaves that day his grassy ring:
Invisible to human ken,
He walks among the sons of men.

Didst e'er, dear Heber, pass along
Beneath the towers of Franchemont,[7]
Which, like an eagle's nest in air,
Hangs o'er the stream and hamlet fair?—
Deep in their vaults, the peasants say,
A mighty treasure buried lay,
Amassed, through rapine and through wrong,
By the last lord of Franchemont.
The iron chest is bolted hard,
A huntsman sits, its constant guard;
Around his neck his horn is hung,
His hanger in his belt is slung;
Before his feet his bloodhounds lie:
An 'twere not for his gloomy eye,
Whose withering glance no heart can brook,
As true a huntsman doth he look,
As bugle e'er in brake did sound,
Or ever holloo'd to a hound.
To chase the fiend, and win the prize,
In that same dungeon ever tries
An aged Necromantic priest;
It is an hundred years, at least,
Since 'twixt them first the strife begun,
And neither yet has lost or won.
And oft the conjuror's words will make
The stubborn demon groan and quake;
And oft the bands of iron break,
Or bursts one lock, that still amain,
Fast as 'tis opened, shuts again.
That magic strife within the tomb
May last until the day of doom,
Unless the adept shall learn to tell
The very word that clenched the spell,
When Franch'mont locked the treasure-cell.
An hundred years are past and gone,
And scarce three letters has he won.

Such general superstition may
Excuse for old Pitscottie say;
Whose gossip history has given
My song the messenger from heaven,
That warned, in Lithgow, Scotland's king,
Nor less the infernal summoning;
May pass the monk of Durham's tale,
Whose demon fought in Gothic mail;
May pardon plead for Fordon grave,
Who told of Gifford's goblin-cave.
But why such instances to you,
Who, in an instant, can review
Your treasured hoards of various lore,
And furnish twenty thousand more?
Hoards, not like theirs whose volumes rest
Like treasures in the Franch'mont chest;
While gripple owners still refuse
To others what they cannot use,—
Give them the priest's whole century,
They shall not spell you letters three;
Their pleasure in the books the same
The magpie takes in pilfered gem.
Thy volumes, open as thy heart,
Delight, amusement, science, art,
To every ear and eye impart;
Yet who, of all who thus employ them,
Can, like the owner's self, enjoy them?—
But, hark! I hear the distant drum:
The day of Flodden field is come.—
Adieu, dear Heber! life and health,
And store of literary wealth.

CANTO VI.

THE BATTLE.

I.

While great events were on the gale,
And each hour brought a varying tale,
And the demeanor, changed and cold,
Of Douglas, fretted Marmion bold,
And, like the impatient steed of war,
He snuffed the battle from afar;
And hopes were none, that back again
Herald should come from Terouenne,
Where England's king in leaguer lay,
Before decisive battle-day;—
While these things were, the mournful Clare
Did in the dame's devotions share:
For the good countess ceaseless prayed,
To heaven and saints, her sons to aid,
And, with short interval, did pass
From prayer to book, from book to mass,
And all in high baronial pride,—
A life both dull and dignified;—
Yet as lord Marmion nothing pressed
Upon her intervals of rest,
Dejected Clara well could bear
The formal state, the lengthened prayer,
Though dearest to her wounded heart
The hours that she might spend apart.

II.

I said, Tantallon's dizzy steep
Hung o'er the margin of the deep.
Many a rude tower and rampart there
Repelled the insult of the air,
Which, when the tempest vexed the sky,
Half breeze, half spray, came whistling by.
Above the rest, a turret square
Did o'er its Gothic entrance bear,
Of sculpture rude, a stony shield;
The Bloody Heart was in the field,

And in the chief three mullets stood,
The cognizance of Douglas blood.
The turret held a narrow stair,
Which, mounted, gave you access where
A parapet's embattled row
Did seaward round the castle go.
Sometimes in dizzy steps descending,
Sometimes in narrow circuit bending,
Sometimes in platform broad extending,
Its varying circle did combine
Bulwark, and bartizan, and line,
And bastion, tower, and vantage-coign;
Above the booming ocean leant
The far-projecting battlement;
The billows burst, in ceaseless flow,
Upon the precipice below.
Where'er Tantallon faced the land,
Gate-works, and walls, were strongly manned;
No need upon the sea-girt side;
The steepy rock and frantic tide,
Approach of human step denied;
And thus these lines and ramparts rude,
Were left in deepest solitude.

III.

And, for they were so lonely, Clare
Would to these battlements repair,
And muse upon her sorrows there,
And list the sea-bird's cry;
Or, slow like noontide ghost, would glide
Along the dark-gray bulwark's side,
And ever on the heaving tide
Look down with weary eye.
Oft did the cliff, and swelling main,
Recal the thoughts of Whitby's fane,—
A home she ne'er might see again:
For she had laid adown,
So Douglas bade, the hood and veil,
And frontlet of the cloister pale,
And Benedictine gown:
It were unseemly sight he said,
A novice out of convent shade.—
Now her bright locks, with sunny glow,
Again adorned her brow of snow;
Her mantle rich, whose borders, round,
A deep and fretted broidery bound,
In golden foldings sought the ground;
Of holy ornament, alone
Remained a cross of ruby stone;
And often did she look
On that which in her hand she bore,
With velvet bound, and broidered o'er
Her breviary book.
In such a place, so lone, so grim,
At dawning pale, or twilight dim,
It fearful would have been,
To meet a form so richly dressed,
With book in hand and cross on breast,
And such a woful mien.
Fitz-Eustace, loitering with his bow,
To practice on the gull and crow,
Saw her, at distance, gliding slow,
And did by Mary swear,—
Some love-lorn fay she might have been,
Or, in romance, some spell-bound queen;
For ne'er, in work-day world, was seen
A form so witching fair.

IV.

Once walking thus, at evening tide,
It chanced a gliding sail she spied,
And, sighing, thought—"The abbess there,
Perchance, does to her home repair;
Her peaceful rule, where duty, free,
Walks hand in hand with charity;
Where oft devotion's tranced glow
Can such a glimpse of heaven bestow,
That the enraptured sisters see
High vision, and deep mystery;
The very form of Hilda fair,
Hovering upon the sunny air,[8]
And smiling on her votaries' prayer.
O! wherefore, to my duller eye,
Did still the saint her form deny!
Was it, that, seared by sinful scorn,
My heart could neither melt nor burn?
Or lie my warm affections low
With him, that taught them first to glow!
Yet, gentle abbess, well I knew,
To pay thy kindness grateful due,
And well could brook the mild command,
That rule thy simple maiden band.—
How different now! condemned to bide
My doom from this dark tyrant's pride.
But Marmion has to learn, ere long,
That constant mind, and hate of wrong,
Descended to a feeble girl
From red De Clare, stout Gloster's earl:
Of such a stem a sapling weak,
He ne'er shall bend, although he break.

V.

"But see!—what makes this armour here?"
For in her path there lay
Targe, corslet, helm;—she viewed them near.—
"The breast-plate pierced!—Ay, much I fear,
Weak fence wert thou 'gainst foeman's spear,
That hath made fatal entrance here,
As these dark blood-gouts say.—
Thus Wilton!—Oh! not corslet's ward,
Not truth, as diamond pure and hard,
Could be thy manly bosom's guard
On yon disastrous day!"—
She raised her eyes in mournful mood,—
Wilton himself before her stood!
It might have seemed his passing ghost,
For every youthful grace was lost;
And joy unwonted, and surprise,
Gave their strange wildness to his eyes.
Expect not, noble dames and lords,
That I can tell such scene in words:
What skilful limner e'er would choose
To paint the rainbow's varying hues,
Unless to mortal it were given
To dip his brush in dies of heaven?
Far less can my weak line declare
Each changing passion's shade;
Brightening to rapture from despair,
Sorrow, surprise, and pity there,
And joy, with her angelic air,
And hope, that paints the future fair,
Their varying hues displayed:
Each o'er its rival's ground extending,
Alternate conquering, shifting, blending,
Till all, fatigued, the conflict yield,
And mighty love retains the field.
Shortly I tell what then he said,
By many a tender word delayed,
And modest blush, and bursting sigh,
And question kind, and fond reply.

VI.

DE WILTON'S HISTORY.

"Forget we that disastrous day,
When senseless in the lists I lay.
Thence dragged,—but how I cannot know,

For sense and recollection fled,
I found me on a pallet low,
Within my ancient beadsman's shed.
Austin,—remember'st thou, my Clare,
How thou didst blush, when the old man,
When first our infant love began,
Said we would make a matchless pair?
Menials, and friends, and kinsmen fled
From the degraded traitor's bed,—
He, only, held my burning head,
And tended me for many a day;
While wounds and fever held their sway.
But far more needful was his care,
When sense returned, to wake despair;
For I did tear the closing wound,
And dash me frantic on the ground,
If e'er I heard the name of Clare.
At length, to calmer reason brought,
Much by his kind attendance wrought,
With him I left my native strand,
And, in a palmer's weeds arrayed,
My hated name and form to shade,
I journeyed many a land;
No more a lord of rank and birth,
But mingled with the dregs of earth.
Oft Austin for my reason feared,
When I would sit, and deeply brood
On dark revenge, and deeds of blood,
Or wild mad schemes upreared.
My friend at length fell sick, and said,
God would remove him soon;
And, while upon his dying bed,
He begged of me a boon—
If ere my deadliest enemy
Beneath my brand should conquered lie,
Even then my mercy should awake,
And spare his life for Austin's sake.

VII.

"Still restless as a second Cain,
To Scotland next my route was ta'en,
Full well the paths I knew.
Fame of my fate made various sound,
That death in pilgrimage I found,
That I had perished of my wound,—
None cared which tale was true:
And living eye could never guess
De Wilton in his palmer's dress:
For, now that sable slough is shed,
And trimmed my shaggy beard and head,
I scarcely know me in the glass.
A chance most wondrous did provide,
That I should be that baron's guide—
I will not name his name!—
Vengeance to God alone belongs;
But, when I think on all my wrongs,
My blood is liquid flame!
And ne'er the time shall I forget,
When, in a Scottish hostel set,
Dark looks we did exchange;
What were his thoughts I cannot tell;
But in my bosom mustered hell
Its plans of dark revenge.

VIII.

"A word of vulgar augury,
That broke from me, I scarce knew why,
Brought on a village tale;
Which wrought upon his moody sprite,
And sent him armed forth by night.
I borrowed steed, and mail,
And weapons, from his sleeping band;
And, passing from a postern door,
We met, and 'countered, hand to hand,—
He fell on Gifford moor.
For the death stroke my brand I drew,
(O then my helmed head he knew,
The palmer's cowl was gone,)
Then had three inches of my blade
The heavy debt of vengeance paid,—
My hand the thought of Austin staid
I left him there alone.—
O, good old man! even from the grave,
Thy spirit could thy master save:
If I had slain my foeman, ne'er
Had Whitby's abbess, in her fear,
Given to my hand this packet dear,
Of power to clear my injured fame,
And vindicate De Wilton's name.—
Perchance you heard the abbess tell
Of the strange pageantry of hell,
That broke our secret speech—
It rose from the infernal shade,
Or featly was some juggle played,
A tale of peace to teach.
Appeal to heaven I judged was best,
When my name came among the rest.

IX.

"Now here, within Tantallon hold,
To Douglas late my tale I told,
To whom my house was known of old.
Won by my proofs, his falchion bright
This eve anew shall dub me knight.
These were the arms that once did turn
The tide of fight on Otterburne,
And Harry Hotspur forced to yield,
When the dead Douglas won the field.
These Angus gave—his armourer's care,
Ere morn, shall every breach repair;
For nought, he said, was in his halls,
But ancient armour on the walls,
And aged chargers in the stalls,
And women, priests, and gray-haired men;
The rest were all in Twisel glen.*
And now I watch my armour here,
By law of arms, till midnight's near;
Then, once again a belted knight,
Seek Surrey's camp with dawn of light.

X.

"There soon again we meet, my Clare!
This baron means to guide thee there:
Douglas reveres his king's command,
Else would he take thee from his band.
And there thy kinsman, Surrey, too,
Will give De Wilton justice due.
Now meeter far for martial broil,
Firmer my limbs, and strung by toil,
Once more"——"O, Wilton! must we then
Risk new-found happiness again,
Trust fate of arms once more?
And is there not an humble glen,
Where we, content and poor,
Might build a cottage in the shade,
A shepherd thou, and I to aid
Thy task on dale and moor?—
That reddening brow!—too well I know,
Not even thy Clare can peace bestow,
While falsehood stains thy name:
Go then to fight! Clare bids thee go!
Clare can a warrior's feelings know,
And weep a warrior's shame;

* Where James encamped before taking post at Flodden.

Can red earl Gilbert's spirit feel,
Buckle the spurs upon thy heel,
And belt thee with thy brand of steel,
And send thee forth to fame!"—

XI.

That night, upon the rocks and bay,
The midnight moonbeam slumbering lay,
And poured its silver light, and pure,
Through loop hole, and through embrazure,
Upon Tantallon tower and hall;
But chief where arched windows wide
Illuminate the chapel's pride,
The sober glances fall.
Much was there need; though, seamed with scars,
Two veterans of the Douglas' wars,
Though two gray priests were there,
And each a blazing torch held high,
You could not by their blaze descry
The chapel's carving fair.
Amid that dim and smoky light,
Chequering the silvery moonshine ght,
A bishop by the altar stood,[9]
A noble lord of Douglas' blood,
With mitre sheen, and rocquet white.
Yet showed his meek and thoughtful eye
But little pride of prelacy;
More pleased that, in a barbarous age,
He gave rude Scotland Virgil's page,
Than that beneath his rule he held
The bishopric of fair Dunkeld.
Beside him ancient Angus stood,
Doffed his furred gown, and sable hood;
O'er his huge form, and visage pale,
He wore a cap and shirt of mail;
And leaned his large and wrinkled hand
Upon the huge and sweeping brand
Which wont, of yore, in battle-fray,
His foemen's limbs to shred away,
As wood-knife lops the sapling spray.[10]
He seemed, as from the tombs around,
Rising at judgment-day,
Some giant Douglas may be found
In all his old array;
So pale his face, so huge his limb,
So old his arms, his look so grim.

XII.

Then at the altar Wilton kneels,
And Clare the spurs bound on his heels;
And think what next he must have felt,
At buckling of the falchion belt,
And judge how Clara changed her hue,
While fastening to her lover's side
A friend, which, though in danger tried,
He once had found untrue!
Then Douglas struck him with his blade:
"Saint Michael and saint Andrew aid,
I dub thee knight.
Arise, sir Ralph, De Wilton's heir!
For king, for church, for lady fair,
See that thou fight."—
And bishop Gawain, as he rose,
Said—"Wilton! grieve not for thy woes,
Disgrace, and trouble;
For he, who honour best bestows,
May give thee double."—
De Wilton sobbed, for sob he must—
"Where'er I meet a Douglas, trust
That Douglas is my brother!"
"Nay, nay," old Angus said, "not so;
To Surrey's camp thou now must go,
Thy wrongs no longer smother.
I have two sons in yonder field;
And, if thou meet'st them under shield,
Upon them bravely—do thy worst;
And foul fall him that blenches first!"

XIII.

Not far advanced was morning day,
When Marmion did his troop array
To Surrey's camp to ride;
He had safe-conduct for his band,
Beneath the royal seal and hand,
And Douglas gave a guide:
The ancient earl, with stately grace,
Would Clara on her palfrey place,
And whispered, in an under tone,
"Let the hawk stoop, his prey is flown."
The train from out the castle drew,
But Marmion stopped to bid adieu:—
"Though something I might plain," he said,
"Of cold respect to stranger guest,
Sent hither by your king's behest,
While in Tantallon's towers I staid;
Part we in friendship from your land,
And, noble earl, receive my hand."
But Douglas round him drew his cloak,
Folded his arms, and thus he spoke:—
"My manors, halls, and bowers, shall still
Be open, at my sovereign's will,
To each one whom he lists, howe'er
Unmeet to be the owner's peer.
My castles are my king's alone,
From turret to foundation stone—
The hand of Douglas is his own;
And never shall in friendly grasp
The hand of such as Marmion clasp."

XIV.

Burned Marmion's swarthy cheek like fire,
And shook his very frame for ire,
And—"This to me!" he said,—
"An 'twere not for thy hoary beard,
Such hand as Marmion's had not spared
To cleave the Douglas' head!
And, first, I tell thee, haughty peer,
He, who does England's message here,
Although the meanest in her state,
May well, proud Angus, be thy mate:
And, Douglas, more I tell thee here,
E'en in thy pitch of pride,
Here, in thy hold, thy vassals near,
(Nay, never look upon your lord,
And lay your hands upon your sword,)
I tell thee, thou'rt defied!
And if thou said'st, I am not peer
To any lord in Scotland here,
Lowland or highland, far or near,
Lord Angus, thou hast lied!"
On the earl's cheek the flush of rage
O'ercame the ashen hue of age:
Fierce he broke forth: "And darest thou then
To beard the lion in his den,
The Douglas in his hall?
And hopest thou hence unscathed to go?
No, by St. Bride of Bothwell, no!—
Up drawbridge, grooms—what, warder, ho!
Let the portcullis fall."[11]
Lord Marmion turned,—well was his need,
And dashed the rowels in his steed,
Like arrow through the arch-way sprung,
The ponderous gate behind him rung:
To pass there was such scanty room,
The bars, descending, razed his plume.

XV.

The steed along the drawbridge flies,
Just as it trembled on the rise;
Not lighter does the swallow skim
Along the smooth lake's level brim:
And when lord Marmion reached his band,
He halts, and turns with clenched hand,
And shout of loud defiance pours,
And shook his gauntlet at the towers.
"Horse! horse!" the Douglas cried, "and chase!"
But soon he reined his fury's pace;
"A royal messenger he came,
Though most unworthy of the name.—
A letter forged! St. Jude to speed!
Did ever knight so foul a deed?[12]
At first in heart it liked me ill,
When the king praised his clerkly skill.
Thanks to St. Bothan, son of mine,
Save Gawain, ne'er could pen a line:
So swore I, and I swear it still,
Let my boy-bishop fret his fill.—
St. Mary mend my fiery mood!
Old age ne'er cools the Douglas' blood,
I thought to slay him where he stood.—
'Tis pity of him, too," he cried:
"Bold can he speak, and fairly ride:
I warrant him a warrior tried."—
With this his mandate he recals,
And slowly seeks his castle's halls.

XVI.

The day in Marmion's journey wore;
Yet, ere his passion's gust was o'er,
They crossed the heights of Stanrig-moor.
His troop more closely there he scann'd,
And missed the palmer from the band.
"Palmer or not," young Blount did say,
"He parted at the peep of day;
Good sooth it was in strange array."—
"In what array?" said Marmion, quick.
"My lord, I ill can spell the trick;
But all night long, with clink and bang,
Close to my couch did hammers clang;
At dawn the falling drawbridge rang,
And, from a loop-hole while I peep,
Old Bell-the-cat came from the keep,
Wrapped in a gown of sables fair,
As fearful of the morning air;
Beneath, when that was blown aside,
A rusty shirt of mail I spied,
By Archibald won in bloody work,
Against the Saracen and Turk:
Last night it hung not in the hall;
I thought some marvel would befal.
And next I saw them saddled lead
Old Cheviot forth, the earl's best steed;
A matchless horse, though something old,
Prompt to his paces, cool and bold.
I heard the sheriff Sholto say,
The earl did much the master* pray
To use him on the battle day;
But he preferred"—"Nay, Henry, cease!
Thou sworn horse-courser, hold thy peace.—
Eustace, thou bear'st a brain—I pray,
What did Blount see at break of day?"

XVII.

"In brief, my lord, we both descried
(For I then stood by Henry's side)
The palmer mount, and outward ride,
Upon the earl's own favourite steed;
All sheathed he was in armour bright,
And much resembled that same knight,
Subdued by you in Cotswold fight:
Lord Angus wished him speed."—
The instant that Fitz-Eustace spoke,
A sudden light on Marmion broke;—
"Ah! dastard fool, to reason lost!"
He muttered; "'Twas not fay nor ghost,
I met upon the moonlight wold,
But living man of earthly mould.—
O dotage blind and gross!
Had I but fought as wont, one thrust
Had laid De Wilton in the dust,
My path no more to cross.—
How stand we now?—he told his tale
To Douglas; and with some avail;
'Twas therefore gloomed his rugged brow.—
Will Surrey dare to entertain,
'Gainst Marmion, charge disproved and vain?
Small risk of that, I trow.
Yet Clare's sharp questions must I shun;
Must separate Constance from the nun—
O what a tangled web we weave,
When first we practise to deceive!—
A palmer too!—no wonder why
I felt rebuked beneath his eye:
I might have known there was but one
Whose look could quell lord Marmion."

XVIII.

Stung with these thoughts, he urged to speed
His troop, and reached, at eve, the Tweed,
Where Lennel's convent closed their march.[13]
(There now is left but one frail arch,
Yet mourn thou not its cells;
Our time a fair exchange has made;
Hard by, in hospitable shade,
A reverend pilgrim dwells,
Well worth the whole Bernardine brood,
That e'er wore sandal, frock, or hood.)
Yet did saint Bernard's abbot there
Give Marmion entertainment fair,
And lodging for his train, and Clare.
Next morn the baron climbed the tower,
To view afar the Scottish power,
Encamped on Flodden edge:
The white pavilions made a show,
Like remnants of the winter snow,
Along the dusky ridge.
Long Marmion looked:—at length his eye
Unusual movement might descry,
Amid the shifting lines:
The Scottish host drawn out appears,
For, flashing on the hedge of spears
The eastern sunbeam shines.
Their front now deepening, now extending,
Their flank inclining, wheeling, bending,
Now drawing back, and now descending,
The skilful Marmion well could know
They watched the motion of some foe,
Who traversed on the plain below.

XIX.

Even so it was;—From Flodden ridge
The Scots beheld the English host
Leave Barmore-wood, their evening post,
And heedful watched them as they crossed
The Till by Twisel bridge.[14]
High sight it is, and haughty, while
They dive into the deep defile;
Beneath the caverned cliff they fall,
Beneath the castle's airy wall.

* His eldest son, the master of Angus.

By rock, by oak, by hawthorn tree,
Troop after troop are disappearing;
Troop after troop their banners rearing
Upon the eastern bank you see.
Still pouring down the rocky den,
Where flows the sullen Till,
And rising from the dim wood glen,
Standards on standards, men on men,
In slow succession still,
And sweeping o'er the Gothic arch,
And pressing on, in ceaseless march,
To gain the opposing hill.
That morn, to many a trumpet-clang,
Twisel! thy rock's deep echo rang;
And many a chief of birth and rank,
Saint Helen! at thy fountain drank.
Thy hawthorn glade, which now we see
In spring-tide bloom so lavishly,
Had then from many an axe its doom,
To give the marching columns room.

XX.

And why stands Scotland idly now,
Dark Flodden! on thy airy brow,
Since England gains the pass the while,
And struggles through the deep defile?
What checks the fiery soul of James?
Why sits that champion of the dames
Inactive on his steed,
And sees, between him and his land,
Between him and Tweed's southern strand,
His host lord Surrey lead?
What vails the vain knight-errant's brand!—
O, Douglas, for thy leading wand!
Fierce Randolph, for thy speed!
O for one hour of Wallace wight,
Or well-skilled Bruce, to rule the fight,
And cry—" Saint Andrew and our right!"
Another sight had seen that morn,
From fate's dark book a leaf been torn,
And Flodden had been Bannock-bourne!—
The precious hour has passed in vain,
And England's host has gained the plain;
Wheeling their march, and circling still,
Around the base of Flodden-hill.

XXI.

Ere yet the bands met Marmion's eye,
Fitz-Eustace shouted loud and high,—
" Hark! hark! my lord, an English drum!
And see, ascending squadrons come
Between Tweed's river and the hill,
Foot, horse, and cannon:—hap what hap,
My basnet to a 'prentice cap,
Lord Surrey's o'er the Till!—
Yet more! yet more!—how fair arrayed
They file from out the hawthorn shade,
And sweep so gallant by!
With all their banners bravely spread,
And all their armour flashing high,
Saint George might waken from the dead,
To see fair England's standards fly."—
" Stint in thy prate," quoth Blount, " thou'dst best,
And listen to our lord's behest."—
With kindling brow lord Marmion said—
" This instant be our band arrayed;
The river must be quickly crossed,
That we may join lord Surrey's host.
If fight king James—as well I trust,
That fight he will, and fight he must,—
The lady Clare behind our lines
Shall tarry, while the battle joins."

XXII.

Himself he swift on horseback threw,
Scarce to the abbot bade adieu,
Far less would listen to his prayer,
To leave behind the helpless Clare.
Down to the Tweed his band he drew,
And muttered, as the flood they view,
" The pheasant in the falcon's claw,
He scarce will yield to please a daw:
Lord Angus may the abbot awe,
So Clare shall bide with me."
Then on that dangerous ford, and deep,
Where to the Tweed Leat's eddies creep,
He ventured desperately:
And not a moment will he bide,
Till squire, or groom, before him ride;
Headmost of all he stems the tide,
And stems it gallantly.
Eustace held Clare upon her horse,
Old Hubert led her rein,
Stoutly they braved the current's course,
And, though far downward driven per force,
The southern bank they gain;
Behind them, straggling, came to shore,
As best they might, the train:
Each o'er his head his yew-bow bore,
A caution not in vain;
Deep need that day that every string,
By wet unharmed should sharply ring.
A moment then lord Marmion staid,
And breathed his steed, his men arrayed,
Then forward moved his band,
Until, lord Surrey's rear-guard won,
He halted by a cross of stone,
That, on a hillock standing lone,
Did all the field command.

XXIII.

Hence might they see the full array
Of either host, for deadly fray;[15]
Their marshalled line stretched east and west,
And fronted north and south,
And distant salutation past
From the loud cannon mouth:
Not in the close successive rattle,
That breathes the voice of modern battle,
But slow and far between.—
The hillock gained, lord Marmion staid:
" Here, by this cross," he gently said,
" You well may view the scene.
Here shalt thou tarry, lovely Clare:
O think of Marmion in thy prayer!
Thou wilt not!—well,—no less my care
Shall, watchful, for thy weal prepare.—
You, Blount and Eustace, are her guard,
With ten picked archers of my train;
With England if the day go hard,
To Berwick speed amain.—
But, if we conquer, cruel maid!
My spoils shall at your feet be laid,
When here we meet again."—
He waited not for answer there;
And would not mark the maid's despair,
Nor heed the discontented look
From either squire; but spurred amain,
And, dashing through the battle plain,
His way to Surrey took.

XXIV.

"———The good lord Marmion, by my life!
Welcome to danger's hour!—
Short greeting serves in time of strife:—
Thus have I ranged my power:

Myself will rule this central host,
Stout Stanley fronts their right,
My sons command the va'ward post,
With Brian Tunstall, stainless knight;[16]
Lord Dacre, with his horsemen light,
Shall be in rearward of the fight,
And succour those that need it most.
Now, gallant Marmion, well I know,
Would gladly to the vanguard go;
Edmund, the admiral, Tunstall there,
With thee their charge will blithly share;
There fight thine own retainers too,
Beneath De Burgh, thy steward true."—
"Thanks, noble Surrey!" Marmion said,
Nor further greeting there he paid;
But, parting like a thunderbolt,
First in the vanguard made a halt,
Where such a shout there rose
Of "Marmion! Marmion!" that the cry
Up Flodden mountain shrilling high,
Startled the Scottish foes.

XXV.

Blount and Fitz-Eustace rested still
With lady Clare upon the hill;
On which (for far the day was spent)
The western sunbeams now were bent;
The cry they heard, its meaning knew,
Could plain their distant comrades view;
Sadly to Blount did Eustace say,
"Unworthy office here to stay,
No hope of gilded spurs to-day.—
But, see! look up—on Flodden bent,
The Scottish foe has fired his tent."
And sudden, as he spoke,
From the sharp ridges of the hill,
All downward to the banks of Till,
Was wreathed in sable smoke;
Volumed and vast, and rolling far,
The cloud enveloped Scotland's war,
As down the hill they broke;
Nor martial shout, nor minstrel tone,
Announced their march; their tread alone,
At times one warning trumpet blown,
At times a stifled hum,
Told England, from his mountain throne
King James did rushing come.—
Scarce could they hear, or see their foes,
Until at weapon point they close.—
They close, in clouds of smoke and dust,
With sword-sway, and with lance's thrust;
And such a yell was there,
Of sudden and portentous birth,
As if men fought upon the earth,
And fiends in upper air;
O! life and death were in the shout,
Recoil and rally, charge and rout,
And triumph and despair.
Long looked the anxious squires; their eye
Could in the darkness nought descry.

XXVI.

At length the freshening western blast
Aside the shroud of battle cast;
And, first, the ridge of mingled spears
Above the brightening cloud appears;
And in the smoke the pennons flew,
As in the storm the white sea-mew.
Then marked they, dashing broad and far,
The broken billows of the war,
And plumed crest of chieftains brave,
Floating like foam upon the wave,
But nought distinct they see:
Wide raged the battle on the plain;
Spears shook, and falchions flashed amain;
Fell England's arrow-flight like rain;
Crests rose, and stooped, and rose again,
Wild and disorderly.
Amid the scene of tumult, high
They saw lord Marmion's falcon fly:
And stainless Tunstall's banner white,
And Edmund Howard's lion bright,
Still bear them bravely in the fight;
Although against them come,
Of gallant Gordons many a one,
And many a stubborn highlandman,
And many a rugged border clan,
With Huntley, and with Home.

XXVII.

Far on the left, unseen the while,
Stanley broke Lennox and Argyle;
Though there the western mountaineer
Rushed with bare bosom on the spear,
And flung the feeble targe aside,
And with both hands the broad sword plied:
'Twas vain:—But fortune, on the right,
With fickle smile, cheered Scotland's fight.
Then fell that spotless banner white,—
The Howard's lion fell;
Yet still lord Marmion's falcon flew
With wavering flight, while fiercer grew
Around the battle yell.
The border slogan rent the sky!
A Home! a Gordon! was the cry;
Loud were the clanging blows;
Advanced,—forced back,—now low, now high,
The pennon sunk and rose;
As bends the bark's mast in the gale,
When rent are rigging, shrouds, and sail,
It wavered 'mid the foes.
No longer Blount the sight could bear:—
"By heaven, and all its saints, I swear,
I will not see it lost!
Fitz-Eustace, you with lady Clare
May bid your beads, and patter prayer,—
I gallop to the host."
And to the fray he rode amain,
Followed by all the archer train.
The fiery youth, with desperate charge,
Made, for a space, an opening large,—
The rescued banner rose,—
But darkly closed the war around,
Like pine-tree, rooted from the ground,
It sunk among the foes.
Then Eustace mounted too;—yet staid,
As loth to leave the helpless maid,
When, fast as shaft can fly,
Blood-shot his eyes, his nostrils spread,
The loose rein dangling from his head,
Housing and saddle bloody red,
Lord Marmion's steed rushed by;
And Eustace, maddening at the sight,
A look and sign to Clara cast,
To mark he would return in haste,
Then plunged into the fight.

XXVIII.

Ask me not what the maiden feels,
Left in that dreadful hour alone:
Perchance her reason stoops, or reels;
Perchance a courage, not her own,
Braces her mind to desperate tone.
The scattered van of England wheels;—
She only said, as loud in air
The tumult roared, "Is Wilton there?"

They fly, or, maddened by despair,
Fight but to die,—"Is Wilton there?"
With that, straight up the hill there rode
Two horsemen drenched with gore,
And in their arms, a helpless load,
A wounded knight they bore.
His hand still strained the broken brand;
His arms were smeared with blood and sand:
Dragged from among the horses' feet,
With dinted shield, and helmet beat,
The falcon crest and plumage gone,
Can that be haughty Marmion!—
Young Blount his armour did unlace,
And, gazing on his ghastly face,
Said—"By saint George, he's gone!
That spear-wound has our master sped,
And see the deep cut on his head!
Good night to Marmion."
"Unnurtured Blount! thy brawling cease:
He opes his eyes," said Eustace; "peace!"

XXIX.

When, doffed his casque, he felt free air,
Around 'gan Marmion wildly stare:
"Where's Harry Blount? Fitz-Eustace where?
Linger ye here, ye hearts of hare?
Redeem my pennon,—charge again!
Cry—'Marmion to the rescue!'—Vain!
Last of my race, on battle-plain
That shout shall ne'er be heard again!—
Yet my last thought is England's:—fly,
To Dacre bear my signet-ring:
Tell him his squadrons up to bring:—
Fitz-Eustace, to lord Surrey hie;
Tunstall lies dead upon the field,
His life-blood stains the spotless shield:
Edmund is down:—my life is reft;—
The admiral alone is left.
Let Stanley charge with spur of fire,—
With Chester charge, and Lancashire,
Full upon Scotland's central host,
Or victory and England's lost.—
Must I bid twice?—hence, varlets, fly!
Leave Marmion here alone—to die."—
They parted, and alone he lay;
Clare drew her from the sight away,
Till pain wrung forth a lowly moan.
And half he murmured,—"Is there none,
Of all my halls have nurst,
Page, squire, or groom, one cup to bring
Of blessed water from the spring,
To slake my dying thirst!"—

XXX.

O, woman! in our hours of ease,
Uncertain, coy, and hard to please,
And variable as the shade
By the light quivering aspen made,—
When pain and anguish wring the brow,
A ministering angel thou!—
Scarce were the piteous accents said,
When, with the baron's casque, the maid
To the nigh streamlet ran:
Forgot were hatred, wrongs, and fears,
The plaintive voice alone she hears,
Sees but the dying man.
She stooped her by the runnel's side,
But in abhorrence backward drew;
For, oozing from the mountain's side,
Where raged the war, a dark-red tide
Was curdling in the streamlet blue.
Where shall she turn?—behold her mark
A little fountain cell,
Where water, clear as diamond-spark,
In a stone basin fell.
Above some half-worn letters say,
Drink, weary pilgrim, drink and pray
For the kind soul of Sybil Grey,
Who built this cross and well.
She filled the helm, and back she hied,
And with surprise and joy espied
A monk supporting Marmion's head;
A pious man, whom duty brought
To dubious verge of battle fought,
To shrieve the dying, bless the dead.

XXXI.

Deep drank lord Marmion of the wave,
And as she stooped his brow to lave—
"Is it the hand of Clare," he said,
"Or injured Constance, bathes my head?"
Then, as remembrance rose,—
"Speak not to me of shrift or prayer!
I must redress her woes.
Short space, few words are mine, to spare:
Forgive and listen, gentle Clare!"—
"Alas!" she said, "the while,—
O think of your immortal weal!
In vain for Constance is your zeal;
She——died at Holy Isle."
Lord Marmion started from the ground,
As light as if he felt no wound;
Though in the action burst the tide,
In torrents, from his wounded side.
"Then it was truth!"—he said—"I knew
That the dark presage must be true.—
I would the fiend, to whom belongs
The vengeance due to all her wrongs,
Would spare me but a day!
For wasting fire, and dying groan,
And priests slain on the altar stone,
Might bribe him for delay.
It may not be!—this dizzy trance—
Curse on yon base marauder's lance,
And doubly cursed my failing brand!
A sinful heart makes feeble hand."
Then, fainting, down on earth he sunk,
Supported by the trembling monk.

XXXII.

With fruitless labour, Clara bound,
And strove to stanch, the gushing wound:
The monk, with unavailing cares,
Exhausted all the church's prayers.
Ever, he said, that, close and near,
A lady's voice was on his ear,
And that the priest he could not hear,
For that she ever sung,
"*In the lost battle, borne down by the flying,*
Where mingles war's rattle with groans of the dying!"
So the notes rung:—
"Avoid thee, fiend!—with cruel hand,
Shake not the dying sinner's sand!
O look, my son, upon yon sign
Of the Redeemer's grace divine;
O think on faith and bliss!—
By many a death-bed I have been,
And many a sinner's parting seen,
But never aught like this."—
The war, that for a space did fail,
Now trebly thundering swelled the gale,
And—Stanley! was the cry;
A light on Marmion's visage spread,
And fired his glazing eye:
With dying hand, above his head,

He shook the fragment of his blade,
And shouted "Victory!—
Charge, Chester, charge! On, Stanley, on!"—
Were the last words of Marmion.

XXXIII.

By this, though deep the evening fell,
Still rose the battle's deadly swell,
For still the Scots, around their king,
Unbroken, fought in desperate ring.
Where's now their victor va'ward wing,
Where Huntley, and where Home?—
O for a blast of that dread horn,
On Fontarabian echoes borne,
That to king Charles did come,
When Rowland brave, and Olivier,
And every paladin and peer,
On Roncesvalles died!
Such blast might warn them, not in vain,
To quit the plunder of the slain,
And turn the doubtful day again,
While yet on Flodden side,
Afar the royal standard flies,
And round it toils, and bleeds, and dies,
Our Caledonian pride!
In vain the wish—for, far away,
While spoil and havoc mark their way,
Near Sybil's cross the plunderers stray.—
"O, lady," cried the monk, "away!"—
And placed her on her steed,
And led her to the chapel fair
Of Tilmouth upon Tweed.
There all the night they spent in prayer,
And, at the dawn of morning, there
She met her kinsman, lord Fitz-Clare.

XXXIV.

But as they left the dark'ning heath,
More desperate grew the strife of death.
The English shafts in volleys hailed,
In headlong charge their horse assailed;
Front, flank, and rear, the squadrons sweep,
To break the Scottish circle deep,
That fought around their king.
But yet, though thick the shafts as snow,
Though charging knights like whirlwinds go,
Though bill-men ply the ghastly blow,
Unbroken was the ring;
The stubborn spearmen still made good
Their dark impenetrable wood,
Each stepping where his comrade stood,
The instant that he fell.
No thought was there of dastard flight;—
Linked in the serried phalanx tight,
Groom fought like noble, squire like knight,
As fearlessly and well;
Till utter darkness closed her wing
O'er their thin host and wounded king.
Then skilful Surrey's sage commands
Led back from strife his shattered bands;
And from the charge they drew,
As mountain-waves, from wasted lands,
Sweep back to ocean blue.
Then did their loss his foeman know;
Their king, their lords, their mightiest, low,
They melted from the field as snow,
When streams are swoln and south winds blow,
Dissolves in silent dew.
Tweed's echoes heard the ceaseless plash,
While many a broken band,
Disordered, through her currents dash,
To gain the Scottish land;
To town and tower, to down and dale,
To tell red Flodden's dismal tale,
And raise the universal wail.
Tradition, legend, tune, and song,
Shall many an age that wail prolong;
Still from the sire the son shall hear
Of the stern strife and earnage drear
Of Flodden's fatal field,
Where shivered was fair Scotland's spear,
And broken was her shield!

XXXV.

Day dawns upon the mountain's side:—
There, Scotland! lay thy bravest pride,
Chiefs, knights, and nobles, many a one,
The sad survivors all are gone.—
View not that corpse mistrustfully,
Defaced and mangled though it be;
Nor to yon border castle high
Look northward with upbraiding eye;[17]
Nor cherish hope in vain,
That, journeying far on foreign strand,
The royal pilgrim to his land
May yet return again.
He saw the wreck his rashness wrought;
Reckless of life, he desperate fought,
And fell on Flodden plain:
And well in death his trusty brand,
Firm clenched within his manly hand,
Beseemed the monarch slain.
But, O! how changed since yon blith night!—
Gladly I turn me from the sight,
Unto my tale again.

XXXVI.

Short is my tale:—Fitz-Eustace' care
A pierced and mangled body bare
To moated Lichfield's lofty pile;
And there, beneath the southern aisle,
A tomb, with Gothic sculpture fair,
Did long lord Marmion's image bear.
(Now vainly for its site you look;
'Twas levelled, when fanatic Brook
The fair cathedral stormed and took;[18]
But, thanks to heaven, and good saint Chad,
A guerdon meet the spoiler had!)
There erst was martial Marmion found,
His feet upon a couchant hound,
His hands to heaven upraised;
And all around, on scutcheon rich,
And tablet carved, and fretted niche,
His arms and feats were blazed.
And yet, though all was carved so fair,
And priests for Marmion breathed the prayer,
The last lord Marmion lay not there.
From Ettrick woods, a peasant swain
Followed his lord to Flodden plain,—
One of those flowers, whom plaintive lay
In Scotland mourns as "wede away."
Sore wounded, Sybil's cross he spied,
And dragged him to its foot and died,
Close by the noble Marmion's side.
The spoilers stripped and gashed the slain,
And thus their corpses were mista'en;
And thus, in the proud baron's tomb,
The lowly woodsman took the room.

XXXVII.

Less easy task it were, to show
Lord Marmion's nameless grave, and low.
They dug his grave e'en where he lay,
But every mark is gone;
Time's wasting hand has done away
The simple cross of Sybil Grey,
And broke her font of stone:

But yet from out the little hill
Oozes the slender springlet still.
Oft halts the stranger there,
For thence may best his curious eye
The memorable field descry;
And shepherd boys repair
To seek the water-flag and rush,
And rest them by the hazel bush,
And plait their garlands fair;
Nor dream they sit upon the grave
That holds the bones of Marmion brave.—
When thou shalt find the little hill,
With thy heart commune, and be still.
If ever, in temptation strong,
Thou left'st the right path for the wrong:
If every devious step, thus trod,
Still lead thee further from the road;
Dread thou to speak presumptuous doom
On noble Marmion's lowly tomb;
But say, "He died a gallant knight,
With sword in hand, for England's right."

XXXVIII.

I do not rhyme to that dull elf,
Who cannot image to himself,
That all through Flodden's dismal night,
Wilton was foremost in the fight;
That, when brave Surrey's steed was slain,
'Twas Wilton mounted him again;
'Twas Wilton's brand that deepest hewed,
Amid the spearmen's stubborn wood,—
Unnamed by Hollinshed or Hall,
He was the living soul of all;
That, after fight, his faith made plain,
He won his rank and lands again;
And charged his old paternal shield
With bearings won on Flodden field.—
Nor sing I to that simple maid,
To whom it must in terms be said,
That king and kinsmen did agree
To bless fair Clara's constancy;
Who cannot, unless I relate,
Paint to her mind the bridal's state;
That Wolsey's voice the blessing spoke,
More, Sands, and Denny, passed the joke;
That bluff king Hal the curtain drew,
And Catherine's hand the stocking threw:
And afterwards, for many a day,
That it was held enough to say,
In blessing to a wedded pair,
"Love they like Wilton and like Clare!"

L'ENVOY TO THE READER.

Why, then, a final note prolong,
Or lengthen out a closing song,
Unless to bid the gentles speed,
Who long have listed to my rede?*—
To statesman grave, if such may deign
To read the minstrel's idle strain,
Sound head, clean hand, and piercing wit,
And patriotic heart—as Pitt!
A garland for the hero's crest,
And twined by her he loves the best;
To every lovely lady bright,
What can I wish but faithful knight?
To every faithful lover too,
What can I wish but lady true?
And knowledge to the studious sage,
And pillow to the head of age.
To thee, dear schoolboy, whom my lay
Has cheated of thy hour of play,
Light task and merry holiday!
To all, to each, a fair good night,
And pleasing dreams, and slumbers light!

* Used generally for *tale*, or *discourse*.

NOTES TO CANTO I.

1. As when the champion of the lake
Enters Morgana's fated house,
Or in the Chapel Perilous,
Despising spells and demons' force,
Holds converse with the unburied corse.—P. 55.

The Romance of the Morte Arthur contains a sort of abridgement of the most celebrated adventures of the Round Table; and, being written in comparatively modern language, gives the general reader an excellent idea of what romances of chivalry actually were. It has also the merit of being written in pure old English; and many of the wild adventures which it contains are told with a simplicity bordering upon the sublime. Several of these are referred to in the text; and I would have illustrated them by more full extracts, but as this curious work is about to be published, I confine myself to the tale of the Chapel Perilous, and of the quest of sir Launcelot after the Sangreal.

"Right so sir Launcelot departed; and when he came to the Chapell Perilous, he alighted downe, and tied his horse to a little gate. And as soon as he was within the church-yard, he saw, on the front of the chapell, many faire rich shields turned upside downe, and many of the shields sir Launcelot had seene knights have before; with that he saw stand by him thirtie great knights; more, by a yard, than any man that ever he had seene, and all those grinned and gnashed at sir Launcelot: and when he saw their countenance, hee dread them sore, and so put his shield afore him, and tooke his sword in his hand, ready to doe battaile; and they were all armed in black harneis, ready, with their shields and swords drawn. And when sir Launcelot would have gone through them, they scattered on every side of him, and gave him the way; and therewith he waxed all bold, and entered into the chapell, and then hee saw no light but a dimme lampe burning, and then was hee ware of a corps covered with a cloath of silke; then sir Launcelot stooped downe, and cut a piece of that cloath away, and then it fared under him as if the earth had quaked a little, whereof he was afeared, and then he saw a faire sword lye by the dead knight, and that he gat in his hand, and hied him out of the chapell. As soon as he was in the chappell-yerd, all the knights spoke to him with a grimly voice, and said, 'knight sir Launcelot, lay that sword from thee, or else thou shalt die.' 'Whether I live or die,' said sir Launcelot, 'with no great words get yee it againe, therefore fight for it and yee list.' Therewith he passed through them; and, beyond the chappell-yerd, there met him a fair damosel, and said, 'Sir Launcelot, leave that sword behind thee, or thou wilt die for it.' 'I will not leave it,' said sir Launcelot, 'for no threats.' 'No!' said she, 'and ye did leave that sword, queene Guenever should ye never see.' 'Then were I a foole and I would leave this sword,' said sir Launcelot. 'Now, gentle knight,' said the damosel, 'I require thee to kisse me once.' 'Nay,' said sir Launcelot, 'that, God forbid!' 'Well, sir,' said she, 'and thou haddest kissed me, thy life dayes had been done; but now, alas!' said she, 'I have lost all my labour; for I ordained this chappell for thy sake, and for sir Gawaine: and once I had sir Gawaine within it; and at that

time he fought with that knight which thare lieth dead in yonder chappell, sir Gilbert the bastard, and at that time hee smote off sir Gilbert the bastard's left hand. And so, sir Launcelot, now I tell thee, that I have loved thee this seaven yeare; but there may no woman have thy love but queene Guenever; but sithen I may not rejoyee to have thy body alive, I had kept no more joy in this world but to have had thy dead body; and I would have balmed it and served, and so have kept it my life daies and daily I should have clipped thee, and kissed thee in the despite of queene Guenever.' 'Yee say well,' said sir Launcelot, 'Jesus preserve me from your subtill craft!' And therewith he took his horse, and departed from her."

2. A sinful man, and unconfess'd,
He took the Sangreal's holy quest,
And, slumbering, saw the vision high,
He might not view with waking eye.—P. 55.

One day, when Arthur was holding a high feast with his knights of the round table, the Sangreal, or vessel out of which the last passover was eaten, a precious relic, which had long remained concealed from human eyes, because of the sins of the land, suddenly appeared to him and all his chivalry. The consequence of this vision was, that all the knights took on them a solemn vow to seek the Sangreal. But, alas! it could only be revealed to a knight at once accomplished in earthly chivalry, and pure and guiltless of evil conversation. All sir Launcelot's noble accomplishments were therefore rendered vain by his guilty intrigue with queen Guenever, or Ganore; and in this holy quest he encountered only such disgraceful disasters, as that which follows:

"But sir Launcelot rode overthwart and endlong in a wild forest, and held no path, but as wild adventure led him; and at the last, he came unto a stone crosse, which departed two wayes, in wast land; and by the crosse, was a stone that was of marble; but it was so darke, that sir Launcelot might not well know what it was. Then sir Launcelot looked by him, and saw an old chappell, and there he wend to have found people. And so sir Launcelot tied his horse to a tree, and there hee put off his shield, and hung it upon a tree, and then hee went unto the chappell door, and found it wasted and broken. And within he found a faire altar, full riehly arrayed with eloth of silk, and there stood a faire eandlesticke, which beare six great eandles, and the eandlestieke was of silver. And when sir Launcelot saw this light, hee had a great will for to enter into the chappell, but hee could find no place where he might enter. Then he was passing heavie and dismaied. Then he returned, and eame againe to his horse, and tooke off his saddle and his bridle, and let him pasture, and unlaced his helme, and ungirded his sword, and laid him downe to sleepe upon his shield before the crosse.

"And so he fell on sleepe, and halfe waking and halfe sleeping, hee saw come by him two palfreys, both faire and white, the which beare a litter, therein lying a sieke knight. And when he was nigh the crosse, he there abode still. All this sir Launcelot saw and beheld, for hee slept not verily, and hee heard him say, 'Oh sweete Lord, when shall this sorrow leave me, and when shall the holy vessell come by me, where through I shall be blessed, for I have endured thus long for little trespasse.' And thus a great while complained the knight, and allwaies sir Launcelot heard it. With that, sir Launcelot saw the eandlesticke, with the fire tapers, come before the crosse; but he could see no body that brought it. Also, there came a table of silver, and the holy vessell of the Sanegreall, the which sir Launcelot had seen before that time in king Petchour's house. And therewithall the sieke knight set him upright, and held up both his hands, and said, 'Faire sweete Lord, which is here within the holy vessell, take heede to mee, that I may bee hole of this great malady.' And therewith upon his hands, and upon his knees, he went so nigh, that he touched the holy vessell, and kissed it: And anon he was hole, and then he said, 'Lord God, I thank thee, for I am healed of this malady.' So when the holy vessell had been there a great while, it went into the chappell againe with the eandlestieke and the light, so that sir Launcelot wist not where it became, for he was overtaken with sinne, that hee had no power to arise against the holy vessell, wherefore afterward many men said of him shame. But he tooke repentance afterward. Then the sieke knight dressed him upright, and kissed the crosse. Then anon his squire brought him his armes, and asked his lord how he did. 'Certainly,' said hee, 'I thanke God, right heartily, for through the holy vessell I am healed: but I have right great mervaile of this sleeping knight, which hath had neither grace nor power to awake during the time that this holy vessell hath beene here present.'—'I darè it right well say,' said the squire, 'that this same knight is defouled with some manner of deadly sinne, whereof he has never confessed.'—'By my faith,' said the knight, 'whatsoever he be, he is unhappie; for, as I deeme, hee is of the fellowship of the round table, the which is entered into the quest of the Sanegreall.'—'Sir,' said the squire, 'here I have brought you all your armes, save your helme and your sword; and therefore, by mine assent, now may ye take this knight's helme and his sword,' and so he did. And when he was eleane armed, he took sir Launcelot's horse, for he was better than his owne, and so they departed from the crosse.

"Then anon sir Launcelot awaked, and set himselfe upright, and he thought him what hee had there seene, and whether it were dreames or not; right so he heard a voice that said, 'Sir Launcelot, more harde then is the stone, and more bitter then is the wood, and more naked and bare than is the liefe of the fig-tree, therefore go thou from hence, and withdraw thee from this holy place;' and when sir Launcelot heard this, hee was passing heavy, and wit not what to doe. And so he departed sore weeping, and cursed the time that he was borne; for then he deemed never to have had more worship; for the words went unto his heart; till that he knew wherefore that hee was so ealled."

3. And Dryden, in immortal strain,
Had raised the table round again,
But that a ribald king and court
Bade him toil on to make them sport;
Demanded for their niggard pay,
Fit for their souls, a looser lay,
Licentious satire, song, and play.—P. 55.

Dryden's melancholy account of his projected epie poem, blasted by the selfish and sordid parsimony of his patrons, is contained in an "Essay on Satire," addressed to the earl of Dorset, and prefixed to the translation of Juvenal. After mentioning a plan of supplying machinery from the guardian angels of kingdoms, mentioned in the book of Daniel, he adds:

"Thus, my lord, I have, as briefly as I could,

given your lordship, and by you the world, a rude draught of what I have been long labouring in my imagination, and what I had intended to have put in practice, (though far unable for the attempt of such a poem,) and to have left the stage, to which my genius never much inclined me, for a work which would have taken up my life in the performance of it. This, too, I had intended chiefly for the honour of my native country, to which a poet is particularly obliged. Of two subjects, both relating to it, I was doubtful whether I should choose that of king Arthur conquering the Saxons, which, being further distant in time, gives the greater scope to my invention; or that of Edward the black prince, in subduing Spain, and restoring it to the lawful prince, though a great tyrant, Don Pedro the cruel; which, for the compass of time, including only the expedition of one year, for the greatness of the action, and its answerable event, for the magnanimity of the English hero, opposed to the ingratitude of the person whom he restored, and for the many beautiful episodes which I had interwoven with the principal design, together with the characters of the chiefest English persons, (wherein, after Virgil and Spencer, I would have taken occasion to represent my living friends and patrons of the noblest families, and also shadowed the events of future ages in the succession of our imperial line,)—with these helps, and those of the machines which I have mentioned, I might perhaps have done as well as some of my predecessors, or at least chalked out a way for others to amend my errors in a like design; but being encouraged only with fair words by king Charles II, my little salary ill paid, and no prospect of a future subsistence, I was then discouraged in the beginning of my attempt; and now age has overtaken me, and want, a more insufferable evil, through the change of the times, has wholly disabled me."

4. Of Ascapart, and Bevis bold.—P. 55.

The "History of Bevis of Hampton" is abridged by my friend Mr. George Ellis, with that liveliness which extracts amusement even out of the most rude and unpromising of our old tales of chivalry. Ascapart, a most important personage in the romance, is thus described in an extract:

> This geaunt was mighty and strong,
> And full thirty foot was long.
> He was bristled like a sow;
> A foot he had between each brow;
> His lips were great, and hung aside;
> His eyes were hollow; his mouth was wide.
> Lothly he was to look on than,
> And liker a devil than a man.
> His staff was a young oak,
> Hard and heavy was his stroke.
> *Specimens of Metrical Romances*, vol. ii, p. 136.

I am happy to say, that the memory of sir Bevis is still fragrant in his town of Southampton; the gate of which is sentinelled by the effigies of that doughty knight-errant, and his gigantic associate.

5. Day set on Norham's castled steep,
And Tweed's fair river, broad and deep, &c.—P. 55.

The ruinous castle of Norham, (anciently called Ubbandford,) is situated on the southern bank of the Tweed, about six miles above Berwick, and where that river is still the boundary between England and Scotland. The extent of its ruins, as well as its historical importance, shows it to have been a place of magnificence, as well as strength. Edward I resided there when he was created umpire of the dispute concerning the Scottish succession. It was repeatedly taken and retaken during the wars between England and Scotland; and indeed scarce any happened in which it had not a principal share. Norham castle is situated on a steep bank, which overhangs the river. The repeated sieges which the castle had sustained rendered frequent repairs necessary. In 1164 it was almost rebuilt by Hugh Pudsey, bishop of Durham, who added a huge keep, or donjon; notwithstanding which, king Henry II, in 1174, took the castle from the bishop, and committed the keeping of it to William de Neville. After this period it seems to have been chiefly garrisoned by the king, and considered as a royal fortress. The Greys of Chillinghame castle were frequently the castellans, or captains of the garrison: yet, as the castle was situated in the patrimony of St. Cuthbert, the property was in the see of Durham till the Reformation. After that period it passed through various hands. At the union of the crowns, it was in the possession of sir Robert Carey (afterwards earl of Monmouth,) for his own life, and that of two of his sons. After king James's accession, Carey sold Norham castle to George Home, earl of Dunbar, for 6000*l*. See his curious memoirs, published by Mr. Constable of Edinburgh.

According to Mr. Pinkerton, there is, in the British Museum, Cal. B. vi, 216, a curious memoir of the Dacres on the state of Norham castle in 1522, not long after the battle of Flodden. The inner ward, or keep, is represented as impregnable: "The provisions are three great vats of salt eels, forty-four kine, three hogsheads of salted salmon, forty quarters of grain, besides many cows, and four hundred sheep lying under the castle-wall nightly; but a number of the arrows wanted feathers, and a good *fletcher* (*i. e.* maker of arrows) was required."—*History of Scotland*, vol. ii, p. 201, Note.

The ruins of the castle are at present considerable, as well as picturesque. They consist of a large shattered tower, with many vaults and fragments of other edifices enclosed within an outward wall of great circuit.

6. —the donjon keep.—P. 55.

It is perhaps unnecessary to remind my readers, that the *donjon*, in its proper signification, means the strongest part of a feudal castle; a high square tower, with walls of tremendous thickness, situated in the centre of the other buildings, from which, however, it was usually detached. Here, in case of the outward defences being gained, the garrison retreated to make their last stand. The donjon contained the great hall, and principal rooms of state for solemn occasions, and also the prison of the fortress; from which last circumstance we derive the modern and restricted use of the word *dungeon*. Ducange (*voce* Dunjo) conjectures plausibly, that the name is derived from these keeps being usually built upon a hill, which in Celtic is called Dun. Borlase supposes the word came from the darkness of the apartments in these towers, which were thence figuratively called dungeons; thus deriving the ancient word from the modern application of it.

7. Well was he armed from head to heel,
In mail and plate, of Milan steel.—P. 56.

The artists of Milan were famous in the middle ages for their skill in armoury, as appears from the following passage, in which Froissart gives an account of the preparations made by Henry, earl of Hereford, afterwards Henry IV, and Thomas, duke of Norfolk, earl Mareschal, for their pro-

posed combat in the lists of Conventry. "These two lords made ample provision of all things necessary for the combat; and the earl of Derby sent off messengers to Lombardy, to have armour from sir Galeas, duke of Milan. The duke complied with joy, and gave the knight, called sir Francis, who had brought the message, the choice of all his armour, for the earl of Derby. When he had selected what he wished for in plated and mail armour, the lord of Milan, out of his abundant love for the earl, ordered four of the best armourers in Milan to accompany the knight to England, that the earl of Derby might be more completely armed."—*Johnes' Froissart*, vol. iv, p. 597.

8. The golden legend bore aright,
Who checks at me, to death is dight.—P. 56.

The crest and motto of Marmion are borrowed from the following story. Sir David de Lindsay, first earl of Crawford, was, among other gentlemen of quality, attended, during a visit to London, in 1390, by sir William Dalzell, who was, according to my authority, Bower, not only excelling in wisdom, but also of a lively wit. Chancing to be at court, he there saw sir Piers Courtenay, an English knight, famous for skill in tilting, and for the beauty of his person, parading the palace, arrayed in a new mantle bearing for device an embroidered falcon, with this rhyme,—

I beare a falcon, fairest of flight,
Who so pinches at her, his death is dight*
In graith.†

The Scottish knight being a wag, appeared next day in a dress exactly similar to that of Courtenay, but bearing a magpie instead of the falcon, with a motto ingeniously contrived to rhyme to the vaunting inscription of sir Piers.

I bear a pie picking at a piece,
Who so picks at her, I shall pick at his nese,‡
In faith.

This affront could only be expiated by a joust with sharp lances. In the course, Dalzell left his helmet unlaced, so that it gave way at the touch of his antagonist's lance, and he thus avoided the shock of the encounter. This happened twice:—in the third encounter, the handsome Courtenay lost two of his front teeth. As the Englishman complained bitterly of Dalzell's fraud in not fastening his helmet, the Scottishman agreed to run six courses more, each champion staking in the hand of the king two hundred pounds, to be forfeited, if, on entering the lists, any unequal advantage should be detected. This being agreed to, the wily Scot demanded that sir Piers, in addition to the loss of his teeth, should consent to the extinction of one of his eyes, he himself having lost an eye in the fight of Otterburn. As Courtenay demurred to this equalization of optical powers, Dalzell demanded the forfeit; which, after much altercation, the king appointed to be paid to him, saying, he surpassed the Englishman both in wit and valour. This must appear to the reader a singular specimen of the humour of that time. I suspect the Jockey club would have given a different decision from Henry IV.

9. They hail'd lord Marmion.
They hail'd him lord of Fontenaye,
Of Lutterward, and Scrivelbaye,
Of Tamworth tower and town.—P. 57.

Lord Marmion, the principal character of the present romance, is entirely a fictitious personage. In earlier times, indeed, the family of Marmion, lords of Fontenay in Normandy, was highly distinguished. Robert de Marmion, lord of Fontenay, a distinguished follower of the conqueror, obtained a grant of the castle and town of Tamworth, and also of the manor of Scrivelby, in Lincolnshire. One, or both, of these noble possessions was held by the honourable service of being the royal champion, as the ancestors of Marmion had formerly been to the duke of Normandy. But after the castle and demesne of Tamworth had passed through four successive barons from Robert, the family became extinct in the person of Philip de Marmion, who died in 20th Edward I, without issue male. He was succeeded in his castle of Tamworth by Alexander de Freville, who married Mazera, his grand-daughter. Baldwin de Freville, Alexander's descendant, in the reign of Richard I, by the supposed tenure of his castle of Tamworth, claimed the office of royal champion, and to do the service appertaining; namely, on the day of coronation, to ride completely armed, upon a barbed horse, into Westminster hall, and there to challenge the combat against any who would gainsay the king's title. But this office was adjuged to sir John Dymocke, to whom the manor of Scrivelby had descended by another of the co-heiresses of Robert de Marmion; and it remains in that family, whose representative is hereditary champion of England at the present day. The family and possessions of Freville have merged in the earls of Ferrars: I have not, therefore, created a new family, but only revived the titles of an old one in an imaginary personage.

It was one of the Marmion family, who, in the reign of Edward II, performed that chivalrous feat before the very castle of Norham, which bishop Percy has woven into his beautiful ballad, "The Hermit of Warkworth." The story is thus told by Leland:

"The Scottes came yn to the marches of England, and destroyed the castle of Werk and Herbotel, and overran much of Northumberland marches.

"At this tyme Thomas Gray and his friends defended Norham from the Scottes.

"It were a wonderful processe to declare, what mischefes cam by hungre and asseges, by the space of xi yeres in Northumberland; for the Scottes became so proude after they had got Berwick, that they nothing esteemed the Englishmen.

"About this tyme there was a great feste made yn Linconshir, to which came many gentlemen and ladies; and amonge them one lady brought a heaulme for a man of were, with a very riche creste of gold, to William Marmion, knight, with a letter of commandment of her lady, that he should go into the daungerest place in England, and ther to let the heaulme be seene and known as famous. So he went to Norham; whither within 4 days of cumming cam Philip Maubray, guardian of Berwicke, having yn his bande 40 men of armes, the very flour of men of the Scottish marches.

"Thomas Gray, capitayne of Norham, seynge this, brought his garison afore the barriers of the castle, behind whom cam William, richly arrayed, as al glittering in gold, and wearing the heaulme, his lady's present.

"Then said Thomas Gray to Marmion, 'Sir knight, ye be cum hither to fame your helmet: mount upon yowr horse, and ryde like a valiant man to yowr foes even here at hand, and I forsake

* Prepared. † Armour. ‡ Nose.

God if I rescue not thy body deade or alyve, or I myself will dye for it.'

"Whereupon he took his cursere, and rode among the throng of ennemyes; the which layed sore stripes on hym, and pulled hym at the last out of his sadel to the grounde.

"Then Thomas Gray, with al the hole garison, lette prick yn among the Scottes, and so woudid them and their horses, that they were overthrown; and Marmion, sore beten, was horsid agayn, and, with Gray, persewed the Scottes yn chase. There were taken 50 horse of price: and the women of Norham brought them to the foote men to follow the chase."

10. Largesse, Largesse.—P. 57.

This was the cry with which heralds and pursuivants were wont to acknowledge the bounty received from the knights. Stewart of Lorn distinguishes a ballad, in which he satirizes the narrowness of James V, and his courtiers, by the ironical burden—

Lerges, lerges, lerges, hay,
Lerges of this new year day.
First lerges, of the king, my chief,
Who came as quiet as a thief,
And in my hand slid—shillings twae!*
To put his largeness to the prief,†
For lerges of this new year day.

The heralds, like the minstrels, were a race allowed to have great claims upon the liberality of the knights, of whose feats they kept a record, and proclaimed them aloud, as in the text, upon suitable occasions.

At Berwick, Norham, and other border fortresses of importance, pursuivants usually resided, whose inviolable character rendered them the only persons that could, with perfect assurance of safety, be sent on necessary embassies into Scotland. This is alluded to in stanza XXI.

11. Sir Hugh the Heron bold,
Baron of Twisell, and of Ford,
And captain of the hold.—P. 57.

Were accuracy of any consequence in a fictitious narrative, this castellan's name ought to have been William; for William Heron of Ford was husband to the famous lady Ford, whose syren charms are said to have cost our James IV so dear. Moreover, the said William Heron was, at the time supposed, a prisoner in Scotland, being surrendered by Henry VIII, on account of his share in the slaughter of sir Robert Ker of Cessford. His wife, represented in the text as residing at the court of Scotland, was, in fact, living in her own castle at Ford.—See sir RICHARD HERON's curious *Genealogy of the Heron family.*

12. The whiles a northern harper rude,
Chanted a rhyme of deadly feud,—
"How the fierce Thirwalls, and Ridleys all," &c.
Page 57.

This old Northumbrian ballad was taken down from the recitation of a woman eighty years of age, mother of one of the miners in Alston-moor, by an agent for the lead mines there, who communicated it to my friend and correspondent, R. Surtees, esquire, of Mainsfort. She had not, she said, heard it for many years; but when she was a girl, it used to be sung at merry makings, "till the roof rung again." To preserve this curious, though rude rhyme, it is here inserted. The ludicrous turn given to the slaughter, marks that wild and disorderly state of society, in which a murder was not merely a casual circumstance, but, in some cases, an exceedingly good jest. The structure of the ballad resembles the "Fray of Support,"* having the same irregular stanza and wild chorus.

I.
Hoot awa', lads, hoot awa',
Ha' ye heard how the Ridleys, and Thirlwalls, and a',
Ha' set upon Albany† Featherstonhaugh,
And taken his life at the Deadman's-haugh?
There was Willimoteswick,
And Hardriding Dick,
And Hughie of Hawden, and Will of the Wa',
I canno' tell a', I canno' tell a',
And mony a mair that the de'il may knaw.

II.
The auld man went down, but Nicol, his son,
Ran away afore the fight was begun;
And he run, and he run,
And afore they were done,
There was mony a Featherston gat sic a stun,
As never was seen since the world begun.

III.
I canno' tell a', I canno' tell a',
Some gat a skelp,‡ and some gat a claw;
But they gar'd the Featherstones haud their jaw,—§
Nicol, and Alick, and a'.
Some gat a hurt and some gat nane,
Some had harness, and some gat sta'en.‖

IV.
Ane gat a twist o' the craig;¶
Ane gat a dunch** o' the wame;††
Symy Haw gat lamed of a leg,
And syne ran wallowing‡‡ hame.

V.
Hoot, hoot, the auld man's slain outright!
Lay him now wi' his face down: he's a sorrowful sight.
Janet, thou donot,§§
I'll lay my best bonnet,
Thou gets a new gude-man afore it be night.

VI.
Hoot away, lads, hoot away,
We's a' be hangid if we stay.
Tak' up the dead man, and lay him ahint the bigging;
Here's the bailey o' Haltwhistle,‖‖
Wi' his great bull's pizzle,
That sup'd up the broo', and syne—in the piggin.¶¶

In explanation of this ancient ditty, Mr. Surtees has furnished me with the following local memorandum: Willimoteswick, the chief seat of the ancient family of Ridley, is situated two miles above the confluence of the Allon and Tyne. It was a house of strength, as appears from one oblong tower, still in tolerable preservation.*** It has been long in possession of the Blacket family. Hardriding Dick is not an epithet referring to horsemanship, but means Richard Ridley of Hardriding,†††

* Two. † Proof.

* See *Minstrelsy of the Scottish border*, vol. i, p. 250.
† Pronounced *Awbony*.
‡ *Skelp* signifies slap, or rather is the same word which was originally spelled *schlap*.
§ *Hold their jaw*, a vulgar expression still in use.
‖ Got stolen, or were plundered; a very likely termination of the fray.
¶ Neck. ** Punch. ††Belly. ‡‡ Bellowing.
§§ *Silly slut.* The border bard calls her so, because she was weeping for her slain husband; a loss which he seems to think might be soon repaired.
‖‖ The bailiff of Haltwhistle seems to have arrived when the fray was over. This supporter of social order is treated with characteristic irreverence by the moss-trooping poet.
¶¶ An iron pot with two ears.
*** Willimoteswick was, in prior editions, confounded with Ridley hall, situated two miles lower, on the same side of the Tyne, the hereditary seat of William C. Lowes, esq.
††† Ridley, the bishop and martyr, was, according to some authorities, born at Hardriding, where a chair was preserved, called the bishop's chair. Others, and particularly his biographer and namesake, Dr. Glocester Ridley, assign the honour of the martyr's birth to Willimoteswick.

the seat of another family of that name, which, in the time of Charles I, was sold on account of the expenses incurred by the loyalty of the proprietor, the immediate ancestor of sir Matthew Ridley. Will of the Wa' seems to be William Ridley of Waltown, so called from its situation on the great Roman wall. Thirlwall castle, whence the clan of Thirlwalls derived their name, is situated on the small river of Tippel, near the western boundary of Northumberland. It is near the wall, and takes its name from the rampart having been *thirled, i. e.* pierced, or breached, in its vicinity. Featherstone castle lies south of the Tyne, towards Alston-moor. Albany Featherstonhaugh, the chief of that ancient family, made a figure in the reign of Edward VI. A feud did certainly exist between the Ridleys and Featherstones, productive of such consequences as the ballad narrates. 24 *Oct.* 22*do Henrici* 8*vi. Inquisitio capt. apud Hautwhistle, sup. visum corpus Alexandri Featherston, Gen. apud Grensilhaugh, felonice interfecti*, 22 *Oct. per Nicolaum Ridley de Unthanke, Gen. Hugon Ridle, Nicolaum Ridle, et alios ejusdem nominis.* Nor were the Featherstones without their revenge; for, 36to Henrici 8vi, we have—*Utlagatio Nicolai Featherston, ac Thome Nyxson, ect., ect., pro homicidio Will Ridle de Morale.*

13. James backed the cause of that mock prince,
Warbeck, that Flemish counterfeit,
Who on the gibbet paid the cheat.
Then did I march with Surrey's power,
What time we razed old Ayton tower.—P. 58.

The story of Perkin Warbeck, or Richard, duke of York, is well known. In 1496, he was received honourably in Scotland; and James IV, after conferring upon him in marriage his own relation, the lady Catharine Gordon, made war on England in behalf of his pretensions. To retaliate an invasion of England, Surrey advanced into Berwickshire at the head of considerable forces, but retreated after taking the inconsiderable fortress of Ayton. Ford, in his Dramatic Chronicle of Perkin Warbeck, makes the most of this inroad:

Surrey. Are all our braving enemies shrunk back,
Hid in the fogges of their distemper'd climate,
Not daring to behold our colours wave
In spight of this infected ayre? Can they
Looke on the strength of Cundrestine defac't;
The glorie of Heydonhall devasted; that
Of Edington east downe; the pile of Fulden
Overthrowne: And this, the strongest of their forts,
Old Ayton Castle, yeelded and demolished,
And yet not peepe abroad? the Scots are bold,
Hardie in battayle, but it seems the cause
They undertake considered, appeares
Unjoynted in the frame on't.

14. For here be some have prick'd as far,
On Scottish ground, as to Dunbar;
Have drunk the monks of St. Bothan's ale,
And driven the beeves of Lauderdale;
Harried the wives of Greenlaw's goods,
And given them light to set their hoods.—P. 58.

The garrisons of the English castles of Wark, Norham, and Berwick, were, as may be easily supposed, very troublesome neighbours to Scotland. Sir Richard Maitland of Ledington wrote a poem, called "The Blind Baron's Comfort;" when his barony of Blythe, in Lauderdale, was *harried* by Rowland Foster, the English captain of Wark, with his company, to the number of 300 men. They spoiled the poetical knight of 5000 sheep, 200 nolt, 30 horses and mares; the whole furniture of his house of Blythe, worth 100 pounds Scots, (*l.*8: 6: 8,) and every thing else that was portable. "This spoil was committed the 16th day of May, 1570, (and the said sir Richard was three-score and fourteen years of age, and grown blind,) in time of peace; when nane of that country *libbened* (expected) such a thing."—"The Blind Baron's Comfort" consists in a string of puns on the word *Blythe*, the name of the lands thus despoiled. Like John Littlewit, he had "a conceit left him in his misery,—a miserable conceit.'

The last line of the text contains a phrase, by which the borderers jocularly intimated the burning a house. When the Maxwells, in 1685, burned the castle of Lochwood, they said they did so to give the lady Johnstone "light to set her hood." Nor was the phrase inapplicable; for, in a letter, to which I have mislaid the reference, the earl of Northumberland writes to the king and council, that he dressed himself, at midnight, at Warkworth, by the blaze of the neighbouring villages, burned by the Scottish marauders.

15. The priest of Shoreswood.—P. 58.

This churchman seems to have been a-kin to Welsh the vicar of St. Thomas of Exeter, a leader among the Cornish insurgents in 1549. "This man," says Hollinshed, "had many good things in him. He was of no great stature, but well set, and mightilie compact: he was a very good wrestler; shot well, both in the long-bow, and also in the cross-bow; he handled his hand-gun and peece very well; he was a very good woodman, and a hardie, and such a one as would not give his head for the polling, or his beard for the washing. He was a companion in any exercise of activitie, and of a courteous and gentle behaviour. He descended of a good honest parentage, being borne at Peneverin, in Cornwall; and yet, in this rebellion, an arch-captain, and a principal doocr."—Vol. iv, p. 958. 4to edition. This model of clerical talents had the misfortune to be hanged upon the steeple of his own church.

16. And of that grot where olives nod,
Where, darling of each heart and eye,
From all the youth of Sicily,
St. Rosalie retired to God.—P. 58.

"Sante Rosalia was of Palermo, and born of a very noble family, and, when very young, abhorred so much the vanities of this world, and avoided the converse of mankind, resolving to dedicate herself wholly to God Almighty, that she, by divine inspiration, forsook her father's house, and never was more heard of, till her body was found in that cleft of a rock, on that almost inaccessible mountain, where now the chapel is built; and they affirm, she was carried up there by the hands of angels; for that place was not formerly so accessible (as now it is) in the days of the saint; and even now it is a very bad, and steepy, and break-neck way. In this frightful place, this holy woman lived a great many years, feeding only on what she found growing on that barren mountain, and creeping into a narrow and dreadful cleft in a rock, which was always dropping wet, and was her place of retirement, as well as prayer; having worn out even the rock with her knees, in a certain place, which is now opened on purpose to show it to those who come here. This chapel is very richly adorned; and on the spot where the saint's dead body was discovered, which is just beneath the hole in the rock, which is opened on purpose, as I said, there is a very fine statue of marble, representing her in a lying posture, railed in all

about with fine iron and brass work; and the altar, on which they say mass, is built just over it." —*Voyage to Sicily and Malta*, by Mr. John Dryden, (son to the poet,) p. 107.

17. Himself still sleeps before his beads
Have mark'd ten aves, and two creeds.—P. 59.

Friar John understood the soporific virtue of his beads and breviary, as well as his namesake in Rabelais. "But Gargantua could not sleep by any means, on which side soever he turned himself. Whereupon the monk said to him, I never sleep soundly but when I am at sermon or prayers. Let us therefore begin, you and I, the seven penitential psalms, to try whether you shall not quickly fall asleep. The conceit pleased Gargantua very well; and, beginning the first of these psalms, as soon as they came to *beati quorum*, they fell asleep, both the one and the other."

18. The summoned palmer came in place;
— — — —
In his black mantle was he clad,
With Peter's keys, in cloth of red,
On his broad shoulders wrought.—P. 59.

A *palmer*, opposed to a *pilgrim*, was one who made it his sole business to visit different holy shrines; travelling incessantly, and subsisting by charity: whereas the pilgrim retired to his usual home and occupations, when he had paid his devotions at the particular spot which was the object of his pilgrimage. The palmer seems to have been the *Quæstionarii* of the ancient Scottish canons 1242 and 1296. There is, in the Bannatyne MS., a burlesque account of two such persons, entitled "Simmy and his Brother." Their accoutrements are thus ludicrously described (I discard the ancient spelling.)

Syne shaped them up to loup on leas,
Two tabards of the tartan;
They counted nought what their clouts were
When sew'd them on, in certain.
Syne Clampit up St. Peter's keys,
Made of an old red gartane:
St. James's shells, on t'other side, shows
As pretty as a partane
Toe,
On Symmye and his brother.

19. To fair St. Andrews bound,
Within the ocean-cave to pray,
Where good St. Rule his holy lay,
From midnight to the dawn of day,
Sung to the billows' sound.—P. 59.

St. Regulus, (*Scottice*, St. Rule,) a monk of Patræ, in Achaia, warned by a vision, is said, A.D. 370, to have sailed westward until he landed at St. Andrews, in Scotland, where he founded a chapel and tower. The latter is still standing; and, though we may doubt the precise date of its foundation, is certainly one of the most ancient edifices in Scotland. A cave, nearly fronting the ruinous castle of the archbishops of St. Andrews, bears the name of this religious person. It is difficult of access; and the rock in which it is hewed is washed by the German ocean. It is nearly round, about ten feet in diameter, and the same in height. On one side is a sort of stone altar; on the other an aperture into an inner den, where the miserable ascetic, who inhabited this dwelling, probably slept. At full tide egress and regress are hardly practicable. As Regulus first colonised the metropolitan see of Scotland, and converted the inhabitants in the vicinity, he has some reason to complain, that the ancient name of Killrule, (*Celli Reguli*,) should have been superseded, even in favour of the tutelar saint of Scotland. The reason of the change was, that St. Rule is said to have brought to Scotland the reliques of St. Andrew.

20. Thence to St. Fillan's blessed well,
Whose spring can frenzied dreams dispel,
And the crazed brain restore.—P. 59.

St. Fillan was a Scottish saint of some reputation. Although popery is, with us, matter of abomination, yet the common people still retain some of the superstitions connected with it. There are, in Perthshire, several wells and springs dedicated to St. Fillan, which are still places of pilgrimage and offerings, even among the protestants. They are held powerful in cases of madness; and, in some of very late occurrence, lunatics have been left all night bound to the holy stone, in confidence that the saint would cure and unloose them before morning.

NOTES TO CANTO II.

1. The scenes are desert now, and bare,
Where flourish'd once a forest fair.—P. 60.

Ettrick Forest, now a range of mountainous sheep-walks, was anciently reserved for the pleasure of the royal chase. Since it was disparked, the wood has been, by degress, almost totally destroyed, although, wherever protected from the sheep, copses soon arise without any planting. When the king hunted there, he often summoned the array of the country to meet and assist his sport. Thus, in 1528, James V "made proclamation to all lords, barons, gentlemen, landwardmen, and freeholders, that they should compear at Edinburgh, with a month's victuals, to pass with the king where he pleased, to danton the thieves of Teviotdale, Annandale, Liddesdale, and other parts of that country; and also warned all gentlemen that had good dogs, to bring them, that he might hunt in the said country, as he pleased: The whilk the earl of Argyle, the earl of Huntley, the earl of Athole, and so all the rest of the gentlemen of the highlands, did, and brought their hounds with them in like manner to hunt with the king, as he pleased.

"The second day of June the king passed out of Edinburgh to the hunting, with many of the nobles and gentlemen of Scotland with him, to the number of twelve thousand men; and then past to Meggitland, and hounded and hawked all the country and bounds: that is to say, Crammat, Pappertlaw, St. Marylaws, Carlaverick, Chapel, Ewindoores, and Longhope. I heard say, he slew, in these bounds, eighteen score of harts."*

These huntings had, of course, a military character, and attendance upon them was a part of the duty of a vassal. The act for abolishing ward, or military tenures, in Scotland, enumerates the services of hunting, hosting, watching, and warding, as those which were in future to be illegal.

Taylor, the water-poet, has given an account of the mode in which these huntings were conducted in the highlands of Scotland, in the seventeenth century, having been present at Bræmar upon such an occasion:

"There did I find the truly noble and right honourable lords, John Erskine, earl of Mar; James Stuart, earl of Murray; George Gordon, earl of Engye, son and heir to the marquis of Huntley; James Erskine, earl of Buchan; and John, lord Erskine, son and heir to the earl of Mar, and their countesses, with my much honoured, and my last assured and approved friend, sir William Murray,

* Pitscottie's *History of Scotland*, folio edition, p. 143.

knight of Abercarney, and hundred of others, knights, esquires, and their followers; all and every man, in general, in one habit, as if Lycurgus had been there, and made laws of equality: for once in the year, which is the whole month of August, and sometimes part of September, many of the nobility and gentry of the kingdom (for their pleasure) do come into these highland countries to hunt: where they do conform themselves to the habit of the highland-men, who, for the most part, speak nothing but Irish; and, in former time, were those people which were called the *Red-shanks*. Their habit is—shoes, with but one sole a-piece; stockings, (which they call short hose,) made of a warm stuff of diverse colours, which they call tartan: as for breeches, many of them, nor their forefathers, never wore any, but a jerkin of the same stuff that their hose is of; their garters being bands or wreaths of hay, or straw; with a plaid about their shoulders; which is a mantle of diverse colours, much finer and lighter stuff than their hose; with blue flat caps on their heads; a handkerchief, knit with two knots, about their necks: and thus they are attired. Now their weapons are—long bowes and forked arrows, swords, and targets; harquebusses, muskets, durks, and Lochaber axes. With these arms I found many of them armed for the hunting. As for their attire, any man, of what degree soever, that comes amongst them, must not disdain to wear it; for if they do, then they will disdain to hunt, or willingly to bring in their dogs; but if men be kind unto them, and be in their habit, then are they conquered with kindness, and the sport will be plentiful. This was the reason that I found so many noblemen and gentlemen in those shapes. But to proceed to the hunting:

"My good lord of Mar having put me into that shape, I rode with him from his house, where I saw the ruins of an old castle, called the castle of Kindroghit. It was built by king Malcolm Canmore, (for a hunting house,) who reigned in Scotland, when Edward the confessor, Harold, and Norman William reigned in England. I speak of it, because it was the last house I saw in those parts; for I was the space of twelve days after, before I saw either house, cornfield, or habitation for any creature, but deer, wild horses, wolves, and such like creatures—which made me doubt that I should never have seen a house again.

"Thus, the first day, we travelled eight miles, where there were small cottages, built on purpose to lodge in, which they call Lonquhards. I thank my good lord Erskine, he commanded that I should always be lodged in his lodging: the kitchen being always on the side of a bank: many kettles and pots boiling, and many spits turning and winding, with great variety of cheer,—as venison baked; sodden, rost, and stewed beef; mutton, goats, kid, hares, fresh salmon, pigeons, hens, capons, chickens, partridge, muir-coots, heathcocks, caperkellies, and termagants; good ale, sacke, white and claret, tent, (or allegant,) with most potent aquavitæ.

"All these, and more than these, we had continually in superfluous abundance, caught by falconers, fowlers, fishers, and brought by my lord's tenants and purveyors to victual our camps, which consisteth of fourteen or fifteen hundred men and horses. The manner of the hunting is this: Five or six hundred men do rise early in the morning, and they do disperse themselves divers ways, and seven, eight, or ten miles' compass they do bring, or chase in the deer, in many herds, (two, three, or four hundred in a herd,) to such or such a place as the noblemen shall appoint them; that, when day is come, the lords and gentlemen of their companies do ride or go to the said places, sometimes wading up to the middles, through burns and rivers; and then, they being come to the place, do lie down on the ground, till those aforesaid scouts, which are called the Tinkhell, do bring down the deer; but as the proverb says of a bad cook, so these tinkhellmen do lick their own fingers; for, besides their bows and arrows, which they carry with them, we can hear, now and then, a harquebuss or a musket go off, which they do seldom discharge in vain. Then, after we had staid there three hours, or thereabouts, we might perceive the deer appear on the hills round about us, (their heads making a show like a wood,) which, being followed close by the tinkhell, are chased down into the valley where we lay; then all the valley, on each side, being way-laid with a hundred couple of strong Irish greyhounds, they are all let loose, as occasion serves, upon the herd of deer, that, with dogs, guns, arrows, dirks, and daggers, in the space of two hours, fourscore fat deer were slain; which after are disposed of, some one way, and some another, twenty and thirty miles, and more than enough left for us to make merry withal, at our rendezvous."

2. ———Yarrow,
Where erst the outlaw drew his arrow.—P. 60.

The tale of the outlaw Murray, who held out Newark Castle and Ettrick Forest against the king, may be found in the "Border Minstrelsy," vol. i. In the Macfarlane MS., among other causes of James the Fifth's charter to the burgh, is mentioned, that the citizens assisted him to suppress this dangerous outlaw.

3. —lone St. Mary's silent lake.—P. 61.

This beautiful sheet of water forms the reservoir from which the Yarrow takes its source. It is connected with a smaller lake, called the Loch of the Lowes, and surrounded by mountains. In the winter, it is still frequented by flights of wild swans; hence my friend Mr. Wordsworth's lines:

The swans on sweet St. Mary's lake
Float double, swan and shadow.

Near the lower extremity of the lake, are the ruins of Dryhope tower, the birth-place of Mary Scott, daughter of Philip Scott of Dryhope, and famous by the traditional name of the Flower of Yarrow. She was married to Walter Scott of Harden, no less renowned for his depredations, than his bride for her beauty. Her romantic appellation was, in latter days, with equal justice, conferred on miss Mary Lilias Scott, the last of the elder branch of the Harden family. The author well remembers the talent and spirit of the latter Flower of Yarrow, though age had then injured the charms which procured her the name. The words usually sung to the air of "Tweedside," beginning "What beauties does Flora disclose," were composed in her honour.

4. For though, in feudal strife, a foe
Hath laid Our Lady's chapel low.—P. 61.

The chapel of St. Mary of the Lowes, (*de lacubus*) was situated on the eastern side of the lake, to which it gives name. It was injured by the clan of Scott, in a feud with the Cranstouns; but continued to be a place of worship during the seventeenth century. The vestiges of the building can now scarcely be traced: but the burial ground is still used as a cemetery. A funeral, in a spot so

very retired, has an uncommonly striking effect. The vestiges of the chaplain's house are yet visible. Being in a high situation, it commanded a full view of the lake, with the opposite mountain of Bourhope, belonging, with the lake itself, to lord Napier. On the left hand is the tower of Dry-hope, mentioned in the preceding note.

5. ——the wizard's grave;
That wizard priest's, whose bones are thrust
From company of holy dust.—P. 61.

At one corner of the burial ground of the demolished chapel, but without its precincts is a small mound, called *Binram's corse*, where tradition deposits the remains of a necromantic priest, the former tenant of the chaplainry. His story much resembles that of Ambrosio in the "Monk," and has been made the theme of a ballad, by my friend Mr. James Hogg, more poetically designated the Ettrick Shepherd. To his volume, entitled the "Mountain Bard," which contains this, and many other legendary stories and ballads of great merit, I refer the curious reader.

6. —dark Lochskene.—P. 61.

A mountain lake, of considerable size, at the head of Moffat-water. The character of the scenery is uncommonly savage; and the earn, or Scottish eagle, has, for many ages, built its nest yearly upon an islet in the lake. Lochskene discharges itself into a brook, which, after a short and precipitate course, falls from a cataract of immense height and gloomy grandeur, called, from its appearance, the "Gray Mare's Tail." The "Giant's Grave," afterwards mentioned, is a sort of trench, which bears that name, a little way from the foot of the cataract. It has the appearance of a battery designed to command the pass.

7. Where, from high Whitby's cloistered pile,
Bound to St. Cuthbert's Holy Isle.—P. 62.

The abbey of Whitby, in the Archdeaconry of Cleaveland, on the coast of Yorkshire, was founded A.D. 657, in consequence of a vow of Oswy, king of Northumberland. It contained both monks and nuns of the Benedictine order; but, contrary to what was usual in such establishments, the abbess was superior to the abbot. The monastery was afterwards ruined by the Danes, and rebuilded by William Percy in the reign of the conqueror. There were no nuns there in Henry the Eighth's time, nor long before it. The ruins of Whitby abbey are very magnificent.

Lindisfarn, an isle on the coast of Northumberland, was called Holy Island, from the sanctity of its ancient monastery, and from its having been the episcopal seat of the see of Durham during the early ages of British christianity. A succession of holy men held that office: but their merits were swallowed up in the superior fame of St. Cuthbert, who was sixth bishop of Durham, and who bestowed the name of his "patrimony" upon the extensive property of the see. The ruins of the monastery upon Holy Island betoken great antiquity. The arches are, in general, strictly Saxon; and the pillars which support them, short, strong, and massy. In some places, however, there are pointed windows, which indicate that the building has been repaired at a period long subsequent to the original foundation. The exterior ornaments of the building being of a light sandy stone, have been wasted, as described in the text. Lindisfarn is not properly an island, but rather, as the venerable Bede has termed it, a semi-isle: for, although surrounded by the sea at full tide, the ebb leaves the sands dry between it and the opposite coast of Northumberland, from which it is about three miles distant.

8. Then Whitby's nuns exulting told
How to their house three barons bold
Must menial service do.—P. 63.

The popular account of this curious service, which was probably considerably exaggerated, is thus given in "A true Account," printed and circulated at Whitby: "In the fifth year of the reign of Henry II, after the conquest of England by William, duke of Normandy, the lord of Uglebarnby, then called William De Bruce: the lord of Smeaton, called Ralph de Percy; with a gentleman and freeholder called Allatson, did, on the sixteenth of October, 1159, appoint to meet and hunt the wild boar, in a certain wood, or desert place, belonging to the abbot of Whitby; the place's name was Eskdale-side, and the abbot's name was Sedman. Then, these young gentlemen being met, with their hounds and boar staves, in the place before mentioned, and there having found a great wild boar, the hounds ran him well near about the chapel and hermitage of Eskdale-side, where was a monk of Whitby, who was a hermit. The boar, being very sorely pursued, and dead-run, took in at the chapel door, there laid him down, and presently died. The hermit shut the hounds out of the chapel, and kept himself within at his meditations and prayers, the hounds standing at bay without. The gentlemen, in the thick of the wood, being just behind their game, followed the cry of their hounds, and so came to the hermitage, calling on the hermit, who opened the door, and came forth; and within they found the boar lying dead; for which, the gentlemen, in a very great fury, because the hounds were put from their game, did most violently and cruelly run at the hermit with their boar-staves, whereby he soon after died. Thereupon the gentlemen, perceiving and knowing that they were in peril of death, took sanctuary at Scarborough; but at that time the abbot being in very great favour with the king, removed them out of the sanctuary; whereby they came in danger of the law, and not to be privileged, but likely to have the severity of the law, which was death for death. But the hermit being a holy and devout man, and at the point of death, sent for the abbot, and desired him to send for the gentlemen who had wounded him. The abbot so doing, the gentlemen came; and the hermit, being very sick and weak, said unto them, 'I am sure to die of those wounds you have given me.' The abbot answered, 'They shall as surely die for the same.' But the hermit answered, 'Not so, for I will freely forgive them my death, if they will be content to be enjoined the penance I shall lay on them for the safeguard of their souls.' The gentlemen, being present, bade him save their lives. Then said the hermit, 'You and yours shall hold your lands of the abbot of Whitby and his successors, in this manner: That, upon Ascension-day, you, or some of you, shall come to the wood of the Stray-heads, which is in Eskdale-side, the same day at sun-rising, and there shall the abbot's officer blow his horn, to the intent that you may know where to find him; and he shall deliver unto you, William de Bruce, ten stakes, eleven strout stowers, and eleven yethers, to be cut by you, or some of you, with a knife of one penny price; and you, Ralph de Percy, shall take twenty-one of each sort, to

be cut in the same manner; and you, Allatson, shall take nine of each sort, to be cut as aforesaid; and to be taken on your backs, and carried to the town of Whitby, and to be there before nine of the clock the same day before mentioned. At the same hour of nine of the clock, if it be full sea, your labour and service shall cease; and, if low water, each of you shall set your stakes to the brim, each stake one yard from the other, and so yether them on each side with your yethers; and so stake on each side with your strout stowers, that they may stand three tides, without removing by the force thereof. Each of you shall do, make, and execute the said service, at that very hour, every year, except it be full sea at that hour: but when it shall so fall out, this service shall cease. You shall faithfully do this in remembrance that you did most cruelly slay me; and that you may the better call to God for mercy, repent unfeignedly of your sins, and do good works. The officer of Eskdale-side shall blow, *Out on you! Out on you! Out on you!* for this heinous crime. If you, or your successors, shall refuse this service, so long as it shall not be full sea at the aforesaid hour, you, or yours, shall forfeit your lands to the abbot of Whitby, or his successors. This I entreat, and earnestly beg, that you may have lives and goods preserved for this service; and I request of you to promise, by your parts in heaven, that it shall be done by you, and your successors, as is aforesaid; and I will confirm it by the faith of an honest man.' Then the hermit said, 'My soul longeth for the Lord: and I do as freely forgive these men my death, as Christ forgave the thieves on the cross.' And, in the presence of the abbot and the rest he said moreover these words, '*In manus tuas, Domine, commendo spiritum meum, a vinculis enim mortis redemisti me, Domine veritatis. Amen.*'— So he yielded up the ghost the eighth day of December, Anno Domini 1169, whose soul God have mercy upon. Amen.

"This service," it is added, "still continues to be performed with the prescribed ceremonies, though not by the proprietors in person. Part of the lands charged therewith are now held by a gentleman of the name of Herbert."

9. The lovely Edelfled.—P. 63.

She was the daughter of king Oswy, who, in gratitude to heaven for the great victory which he won in 655, against Penda, the pagan king of Mercia, dedicated Edelfleda, then but a year old, to the service of God in the monastery of Whitby, of which St. Hilda was then abbess. She afterwards adorned the place of her education with great magnificence.

10. ——————of thousand snakes, each one
Was changed into a coil of stone,
When holy Hilda pray'd.—
— — — —
——————how sea-fowls' pinions fail,
As over Whitby's towers they sail.—P. 63.

These two miracles are much insisted upon by all the ancient writers, who have occasion to mention either Whitby, or St. Hilda. The relics of the snakes which infested the precincts of the convent, and were, at the abbess' prayer, not only beheaded, but petrified, are still found about the rocks, and are termed by protestant fossilists *ammonitæ*.

The other miracle is thus mentioned by Camden: "It is also ascribed to the power of her sanctity, that these wild geese, which, in the winter, fly in great flocks to the lakes and rivers unfrozen in the southern parts, to the great amazement of every one, fall down suddenly upon the ground, when they are in their flight over certain neighbouring fields hereabouts: a relation I should not have made, if I had not received it from several credible men. But those who are less inclined to heed superstition, attribute it to some occult quality in the ground, and to somewhat of antipathy between it and the geese, such as they say is betwixt wolves and scylla-roots: for, that such hidden tendencies and aversions, as we call sympathies, and antipathies, are implanted in many things by provident nature for the preservation of them, is a thing so evident, that every body grants it." The geese, it is almost unnecessary to add, have now forgot their obeisance to St. Hilda, or their antipathy to the soil, and fly over Whitby with as little difficulty as any where else.

11. His body's resting-place, of old,
How oft their patron changed, they told.—P. 63.

St. Cuthbert was, in the choice of his sepulture, one of the most mutable and unreasonable saints in the calendar. He died A.D. 686, in a hermitage upon the Farne Islands, having resigned the bishopric of Lindisfarn, or Holy Island, about two years before. His body was brought to Lindisfarn, where it remained until a descent of the Danes, about 763, when the monastery was nearly destroyed. The monks fled to Scotland, with what they deemed their chief treasure, the relics of St. Cuthbert. The saint was, however, a most capricious fellow traveller; which was the more intolerable, as, like Sinbad's old man of the sea, he journeyed upon the shoulders of his companions. They paraded him through Scotland for several years, and came as far west as Whithern, in Galloway, whence they attempted to sail for Ireland, but were driven back by tempests. He at length made a halt at Norham; from thence he went to Melrose, where he remained stationary for a short time, and then caused himself to be lanched upon the Tweed in a stone coffin, which landed him at Tilmouth, in Northumberland. This boat is finely shaped, ten feet long, three feet and a half in diameter, and only four inches thick; so that, with very little assistance, it might certainly have swam. It still lies, or at least did so a few years ago, in two pieces, beside the ruined chapel of Tilmouth. From Tilmouth, Cuthbert wandered into Yorkshire; and at length made a long stay at Chester-le-street, to which the bishop's see was transferred. At length, the Danes continuing to infest the country, the monks removed to Rippon for a season; and it was in return from thence to Chester-le-street, that, passing through a forest called Dunholme, the saint and his carriage became immovable at a place named Wardlaw, or Wardilaw. Here the saint chose his place of residence; and all who have seen Durham must admit, that, if difficult in his choice, he evinced taste in at length fixing it. It is said, that the Northumbrian catholics still keep secret the precise spot of the saint's supulture, which is only intrusted to three persons at a time. When one dies, the survivors associate to them, in his room, a person judged fit to be the depositary of so valuable a secret.

12. Even Scotland's dauntless king, and heir, &c.
— — — — —
Before his standard fled.—P. 64.

Every one has heard, that when David I, with his son Henry, invaded Northumberland in 1136,

the English host marched against them under the holy banner of St. Cuthbert, to the efficacy of which was imputed the great victory which they obtained in the bloody battle of Northallerton, or Cuton-moor. The conquerors were at least as much indebted to the jealousy and intractability of the different tribes who composed David's army; among whom, as mentioned in the text, were the Galwegians, the Britons of Strath-Clyde, the men of Teviotdale and Lothian, with many Norman and German warriors, who asserted the cause of the empress Maud. See *Chalmer's Caledonia*, p. 622; a most laborious, curious, and interesting publication, from which considerable defects of style and manner ought not to turn aside the Scottish antiquary.

13. 'Twas he, to vindicate his reign,
Edged Alfred's falchion on the Dane,
And turned the conqueror back again.—P. 64.

Cuthbert, we have seen, had no great reason to spare the Danes, when opportunity offered. Accordingly, I find in Simeon of Durham, that the saint appeared in a vision to Alfred, when lurking in the marshes of Glastonbury, and promised him assistance and victory over his heathen enemies: a consolation which, as was reasonable, Alfred, after the victory of Ashendown, rewarded by a royal offering at the shrine of the saint. As to William the conqueror, the terror spread before his army, when he marched to punish the revolt of the Northumbrians, in 1096, had forced the monks to fly once more to Holy Island with the body of the saint. It was, however, replaced before William left the north: and, to balance accounts, the conqueror having intimated an indiscreet curiosity to view the saint's body, he was, while in the act of commanding the shrine to be opened, seized with heat and sickness, accompanied with such a panic terror, that, notwithstanding there was a sumptuous dinner prepared for him, he fled without eating a morsel, (which the monkish historian seems to have thought no small part both of the miracle and the penance,) and never drew his bridle till he got to the river Tees.

14. St. Cuthbert sits, and toils to frame
The sea-born beads that bear his name.—P. 64.

Although we do not learn that Cuthbert was, during his life, such an artificer as Dunstan, his brother in sanctity, yet, since his death, he has acquired the reputation of forging those *entrochiæ* which are found among the rocks of Holy Island, and pass there by the name of St. Cuthbert's beads. While at this task he is supposed to sit during the night upon a certain rock, and use another as his anvil. This story was perhaps credited in former days; at least the saint's legend contains some not more probable.

15. Old Colwulf.—P. 64.

Ceolwolf, or Colwulf, king of Northumberland, flourished in the eighth century. He was a man of some learning: for the venerable Bede dedicates to him his "Ecclesiastical History." He abdicated the throne about 738, and retired to Holy Island, where he died in the odour of sanctity. Saint as Colwulf was, however, I fear the foundation of the penance-vault does not correspond with his character; for it is recorded among his *memorabilia*, that, finding the air of the island raw and cold, he indulged the monks, whose rule had hitherto confined them to milk or water, with the comfortable privilege of using wine or ale. If any rigid antiquary insists on this objection, he is welcome to suppose the penance-vault was intended, by the founder, for the more genial purposes of a cellar.

These penitential vaults were the *geissel-gewolbe* of German convents. In the earlier and more rigid times of monastic discipline, they were sometimes used as a cemetery for the lay benefactors of the convent, whose unsanctified corpses were then seldom permitted to pollute the choir. They also served as places of meeting for the chapter, when measures of uncommon severity were to be adopted. But their more frequent use, as implied by the name, was as places for performing penances, or undergoing punishment.

16. ——Tynemouth's haughty prioress.—P. 64.

That there was an ancient priory at Tynemouth is certain. Its ruins are situated on a high rocky point; and, doubtless, many a vow was made at the shrine by the distressed mariners, who drove towards the iron-bound coast of Northumberland in stormy weather. It was anciently a nunnery; for Virea, abbess of Tynemouth, presented St. Cuthbert (yet alive) with a rare winding-sheet, in emulation of a holy lady called Tuda, who had sent him a coffin: But, as in the case of Whitby, and of Holy Island, the introduction of nuns at Tynemouth, in the reign of Henry VIII, is an anachronism. The nunnery at Holy Island is altogether fictitious. Indeed, St. Cuthbert was unlikely to permit such an establishment; for, notwithstanding his accepting the mortuary gifts above mentioned, and his carrying on a visiting acquaintance with the abbess of Coldingham, he certainly hated the whole female sex; and, in revenge of a slippery trick played on him by an Irish princess, he, after death, inflicted severe penances on such as presumed to approach within a certain distance of his shrine.

17. On those the wall was to enclose,
Alive, within the tomb.—P. 65.

It is well known, that the religious, who broke their vows of chastity, were subjected to the same penalty as the Roman vestals in a similar case. A small niche, sufficient to enclose their bodies, was made in the massive wall of the convent; a slender pittance of food and water was deposited in it, and the awful words, *Vade in pace*, were the signal for immuring the criminal. It is not likely that, in latter times, this punishment was often resorted to; but, among the ruins of the abbey of Coldingham, were some years ago discovered the remains of a female skeleton, which, from the shape of the niche, and position of the figure, seemed to be that of an immured nun.

NOTES TO CANTO III.

1. The village inn.—P. 68.

The accommodations of a Scottish hostelrie, or inn, in the 16th century, may be collected from Dunbar's admirable tale of "The Friars of Berwick." Simon Lawder, "the gay ostleir," seems to have lived very comfortably; and his wife decorated her person with a scarlet kirtle, and a belt of silk and silver, and rings upon her fingers; and feasted her paramour with rabbits, capons, partridges, and Bourdeaux wine. At least, if the Scottish inns were not good, it was not for want of encouragement from the legislature; who, so early as the reign of James I. not only enacted, that in all boroughs and fairs there be hostellaries, having stables and chambers, and provisions for man and horse, but, by another statute, ordained that no man, travelling on horse or foot, should presume

to lodge any where except in these hostellaries; and that no person, save inn-keepers, should receive such travellers, under the penalty of forty shillings for exercising such hospitality.* But, in spite of these provident enactments, the Scottish hostels are but indifferent, and strangers continue to find reception in the houses of individuals.

2. The death of a dear friend.—P. 70.

Among other omens to which faithful credit is given among the Scottish peasantry, is what is called the "dead-bell," explained by my friend James Hogg, to be that tinkling in the ears which the country people regard as the secret intelligence of some friend's decease. He tells a story to the purpose in the "Mountain Bard," p. 26.

3. ——the goblin hall.—P. 70.

A vaulted hall under the ancient castle of Gifford, or Yester, (for it bears either name indifferently,) the construction of which has, from a very remote period, been ascribed to magic. The Statistical Account of the Parish of Carvald and Baro gives the following account of the present state of this castle and apartment: "Upon a peninsula, formed by the water of Hopes on the east, and a large rivulet on the west, stands the ancient castle of Yester. Sir David Dalrymple, in his annals, relates, that 'Hugh Gifford de Yester died in 1267; that in his castle there was a capacious cavern formed by magical art, and called in the country, Bohall, i. e. Hobgoblin hall.' A stair of twenty-four steps led down to this apartment; which is a large and spacious hall, with an arched roof; and though it hath stood for so many centuries, and been exposed to the external air for a period of fifty or sixty years, it is still as firm and entire as if it had only stood a few years. From the floor of this hall, another stair of thirty-six steps leads down to a pit which hath a communication with Hopeswater. A great part of the walls of this large and ancient castle are still standing. There is a tradition, that the castle of Yester was the last fortification in this country that surrendered to General Gray, sent into Scotland by protector Somerset." *Statistical Account*, vol. xiii. I have only to add, that, in 1737, the goblin hall was tenanted by the marquis of Tweeddale's falconer, as I learn from a poem by Boyse, entitled "Retirement," written upon visiting Yester. It is now rendered inaccessible by the fall of the stair.

Sir David Dalrymple's authority for the anecdote is Fordun, whose words are,—"A. D. MCCLXVII, *Hugo Giffard de Yester moritur; cujus castrum, vel saltem caveam et dongionem, arte dæmonica antiquæ relationes ferunt fabrifacta: nam ibidem habetur mirabilis specus subterraneus, opere mirifico constructus, magno terrarum spatio protelatus, qui communiter* BO-HALL *appellatus est.*" Lib. x, cap. 21.—Sir David conjectures, that Hugh de Gifford must either have been a very wise man, or a great oppressor.

4. There floated Haco's banner trim,
Above Norweyan warriors grim.—P. 71.

In 1263, Haco, king of Norway, came into the Firth of Clyde with a powerful armament, and made a descent at Largs, in Ayrshire. Here he was encountered and defeated, on the 2d October, by Alexander III. Haco returned to Orkney, where he died soon after this disgrace to his arms. There are still existing, near the place of battle, many barrows, some of which, having been opened, were found, as usual, to contain bones and urns.

5. ——his wizard habit strange.—P. 71.

"Magicians, as is well known, were very curious in the choice and form of their vestments. Their caps are oval, or like pyramids, with lappets on each side, and fur within. Their gowns are long, and furred with fox-skins, under which they have a linen garment, reaching to the knee. Their girdles are three inches broad, and have many cabalistical names, with crosses, trines, and circles inscribed on them. Their shoes should be of new russet leather, with a cross cut upon them. Their knives are dagger fashion; and their swords have neither guards nor scabbards." See these, and many other particulars, in the discourse concerning devils and spirits, annexed to *Reginald Scott's Discovery of Witchcraft*, edition 1665.

6. Upon his breast a pentacle.—P. 71.

"A pentacle is a piece of fine linen, folded with five corners, according to the five senses, and suitably inscribed with characters. This the magician extends towards the spirits which he evokes, when they are stubborn and rebellious, and refuse to be conformable unto the ceremonies and rites of magic." See the discourse, &c. above mentioned, p. 66.

7. As born upon that blessed night,
When yawning graves, and dying groan,
Proclaimed hell's empire overthrown.—P. 71.

It is a popular article of faith, that those who are born on christmas, or good Friday, have the power of seeing spirits, and even of commanding them. The Spaniards imputed the haggard and downcast looks of their Philip II, to the disagreeable visions to which this privilege subjected him.

8. Yet still the mighty spear and shield,
The elfin warrior doth wield,
Upon the brown hill's breast.—P. 72.

The following extract from the essay upon the fairy superstitions, in "The Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border," vol. ii, will show whence many of the particulars of the combat between Alexander III and the goblin knight are derived:

"Gervase of Tilbury (*Otia Imperial. ap. Script. rer. Brunswic.* vol. i, p. 797) relates the following popular story concerning a fairy knight: 'Osbert, a bold and powerful baron, visited a noble family in the vicinity of Wandlebury, in the bishoprick of Ely. Among other stories related in the social circle of his friends, who, according to custom, amused each other by repeating ancient tales and traditions, he was informed, that if any knight, unattended, entered an adjacent plain by moonlight, and challenged an adversary to appear, he would be immediately encountered by a spirit in the form of a knight. Osbert resolved to make the experiment, and set out attended by a single squire, whom he ordered to remain without the limits of the plain, which was surrounded by an ancient entrenchment. On repeating the challenge, he was instantly assailed by an adversary, whom he quickly unhorsed, and seized the reins of his steed. During this operation, his ghostly opponent sprung up, and darting his spear, like a javelin, at Osbert, wounded him in the thigh. Osbert returned in triumph with the horse, which he committed to the care of his servants. The horse was of a sable colour, as well as his whole accoutrements, and apparently of great beauty and vigour. He remained with his keeper till cock-crowing, when, with eyes flashing fire, he reared, spurned the

* James I, parliament i, cap. 24; parliament iii, cap. 56.

ground, and vanished. On disarming himself, Osbert perceived that he was wounded, and that one of his steel-boots was full of blood. Gervase adds, that, as long as he lived, the scar of his wound opened afresh on the anniversary of the eve on which he encountered the spirit.'—Less fortunate was the gallant Bohemian knight, who, travelling by night with a single companion, came in sight of a fairy host, arrayed under displayed banners. Despising the remonstrances of his friend, the knight pricked forward to break a lance with a champion, who advanced from the ranks, apparently in defiance. His companion beheld the Bohemian overthrown, horse and man, by his aerial adversary; and returning to the spot next morning, he found the mangled corpses of the knight and his steed."—*Hierarchy of Blessed Angels*, p. 554.

Besides the instances of elfin chivalry above quoted, many others might be alleged in support of employing fairy machinery in this manner. The forest of Glenmore, in the north highlands, is believed to be haunted by a spirit called *Lham-dearg*, in the array of an ancient warrior, having a bloody hand, from which he takes his name. He insists upon those with whom he meets doing battle with him: and the clergyman, who makes up an account of the district, extant in the Macfarlane MS., in the Advocates' library, gravely assures us, that, in his time, *Lham-dearg* fought with three brothers whom he met in his walk, none of whom long survived the ghostly conflict. Barclay, in his "Euphormion," gives a singular account of an officer, who had ventured, with his servant, rather to intrude upon a haunted house, in a town in Flanders, than to put up with worse quarters elsewhere. After taking the usual precautions of providing fires, lights, and arms, they watched till midnight, when, behold! the severed arm of a man dropped from the ceiling; this was followed by the legs, the other arm, the trunk, and the head of the body, all separately. The members rolled together, united themselves in the presence of the astonished soldiers, and formed a gigantic warrior, who defied them both to combat. Their blows, although they penetrated the body, and amputated the limbs of their strange antagonist, had, as the reader may easily believe, little effect on an enemy who possessed such powers of self-union; nor did his efforts make a more effectual impression upon them. How the combat terminated I do not exactly remember, and have not the book by me; but I think the spirit made to the intruders on his mansion the usual proposal, that they should renounce their redemption: which being declined, he was obliged to retreat.

The most singular tale of the kind is contained in an extract communicated to me by my friend Mr. Surtees of Mainsforth, in the bishopric, who copied it from a MS. note in a copy of Burthogge "On the nature of Spirits," 8vo. 1694, which had been the property of the late Mr. Gill, attorney-general of Egerton, bishop of Durham. "It was not," says my obliging correspondent, "in Mr. Gill's own hand, but probably an hundred years older, and was said to be, *E libro convent. Dunelm. per T. C. extract.* whom I believe to have been Thomas Cradocke, esq. barrister, who held several offices under the see of Durham an hundred years ago. Mr. Gill was possessed of most of his manuscripts." The extract which, in fact, suggested the introduction of the tale into the present poem, runs thus:

"Rem miram hujusmodi quæ nostris temporibus evenit, teste viro nobili ac fide dignissimo, enarrare haud pigebit. Radulphus Bulmer, cum e castris quæ tunc temporis prope Norham posita erant, oblectationis causa exiisset, ac in ulteriore Tuedæ ripa prædam cum canibus leporariis insequeretur, forte cum Scoto quodam nobili, sibi antehac ut videbatur familiariter cognito, congressus est; ac ut fas erat inter inimicos, flagrante bello, brevissima interrogationis mora interposita, alterutros invicem incitato cursu infestis animis petiere. Noster, primo occurso, equo præ acerrimo hostis impetu, labante, in terram eversus, pectore et capite læso, sanguinem mortuo similis evomebat. Quem ut se ægre habentem comiter allocutos est alter, pollicitusque modo auxilium non abnegaret, monitisque obtemperans ab omni rerum sacrarum cogitatione abstineret, nec Deo, Deiparæ Virgini, Sanctove ullo preces aut vota efferet, vel inter sese conciperet, se brevi eum sanum validumque restiturum esse. Præ angore oblata conditio accepta est; ac veterator ille, nescio quid obsceni murmuris insusurrans, prehensa manu, dicto citius in pedes sanum ut antea sublevavit. Noster autem, maxima præ rei inaudita novitate formidine perculsus, Mi Jesu! exclamat, vel quid simile; ac subito respiciens, nec hostem nec ullum alium conspicit, equum solum gravissimo nuper casu afflictum, per summam pacem in rivo fluvii pascentem. Ad castra itaque mirabundus revertens, fidei dubius, rem primo occultavit, dein confecto bello, confessori suo totam asseruit. Delusoria procul dubio res tota, ac mala veteratoris illius aperitur fraus, qua hominem christianum ad vetitum tale auxilium pelliceret. Nomen atcunque illius (nobilis alias ac clari) rectendum ducto, cum haud dubium sit quin Diabolus, Deo permittente, formam quam libuerit, immo angeli lucis, sacre oculo Dei teste, posset assumere." The MS. Chronicle, from which Mr. Cradocke took this curious extract, cannot now be found in the chapter library of Durham, or at least, has hitherto escaped the researches of my friendly correspondent.

Lindesay is made to allude to this adventure of Ralph Bulmer, as a well known story, in the 4th canto, stanza XXII.

The northern champions of old were accustomed peculiarly to search for, and delight in, encounters with such military spectres. See a whole chapter on the subject in *Bartholinus de Causis contemptæ Mortis a Danis*, p. 253.

NOTES TO CANTO IV.

1. Close to the hut, no more his own,
Close to the aid he sought in vain,
The morn may find the stiffened swain.—P. 73.

I cannot help here mentioning, that, on the night in which these lines were written, suggested, as they were, by a sudden fall of snow, beginning after sunset, an unfortunate man perished exactly in the manner here described, and his body was next morning found close to his own house. The accident happened within five miles of the farm of Ashestiel.

2. Scarce had lamented Forbes paid, &c.—P. 74.

Sir William Forbes of Pitsligo, baronet, unequalled, perhaps, in the degree of individual affection entertained for him by his friends, as well as in the general respect and esteem of Scotland at large. His "Life of Beattie," whom he befriended and patronized in life, as well as celebrated after

his decease, was not long published, before the benevolent and affectionate biographer was called to follow the subject of his narrative. This melancholy event very shortly succeeded the marriage of the friend, to whom this introduction is addressed, with one of sir William's daughters.

3. —friar Rush.—P. 74.

This personage is a strolling demon, or *esprit follet*, who, once upon a time, got admittance into a monastery as a scullion, and played the monks many pranks. He was also a sort of Robin Goodfellow, and Jack o' Lantern. It is in allusion to this mischievous demon that Milton's clown speaks,—

> She was pinched and pulled, she said,
> And he by *friar's lantern* led.

"The History of Friar Rush" is of extreme rarity, and, for some time, even the existence of such a book was doubted, although it is expressly alluded to by Reginald Scott, in his "Discovery of Witchcraft." I have perused a copy in the valuable library of my friend Mr. Heber; and I observe, from Mr. Beloe's "Anecdotes of Literature," that there is one in the excellent collection of the marquis of Stafford.

4. Sir David Lindesay of the mount,
Lord lion-king-at-arms.—*P.* 75.

The late elaborate edition of sir David Lindesay's works, by Mr. George Chalmers, has probably introduced him to many of my readers. It is perhaps to be regretted, that the learned editor has not bestowed more pains in elucidating his author, even although he should have omitted, or at least reserved, his disquisitions on the origin of the language used by the poet:* but, with all its faults, his work is an acceptable present to Scottish antiquaries. Sir David Lindesay was well known for his early efforts in favour of the reformed doctrines; and, indeed, his play, coarse as it now seems, must have had a powerful effect upon the people of his age. I am uncertain if I abuse poetical license, by introducing sir David Lindesay in the character of lion-herald sixteen years before he obtained that office. At any rate, I am not the first who has been guilty of the anachronism; for the author of "Flodden Field" despatches *Dallamount*, which can mean nobody but sir David de la Mont, to France, on the message of defiance from James IV to Henry VIII. It was often an office imposed on the lion-king-at-arms, to receive foreign ambassadors; and Lindesay himself did this honour to sir Ralph Sadler in 1539-40. Indeed, the oath of the lion, in its first article, bears reference to his frequent employment upon royal messages and embassies.

The office of heralds, in feudal times, being held of the utmost importance, the inauguration of the kings-at-arms, who presided over their colleges, was proportionally solemn. In fact, it was the mimicry of a royal coronation, except that the unction was made with wine instead of oil. In Scotland, a namesake and kinsman of sir David Lindesay, inaugurated in 1592, "was crowned by king James with the ancient crown of Scotland, which was used before the Scottish kings assumed a close crown;" and, on occasion of the same solemnity, dined at the king's table, wearing the crown. It is probable that the coronation of his predecessor was not less solemn. So sacred was the herald's office, that, in 1515, lord Drummond was by parliament declared guilty of treason, and his lands forfeited, because he had struck, with his fist, the lion-king-at-arms, when he reproved him for his follies.* Nor was he restored, but at the lion's earnest solicitation.

5. —Crichtoun castle.—P. 76.

A large ruinous castle on the banks of the Tyne, about seven miles from Edinburgh. As indicated in the text, it was built at different times and with a very different regard to splendour and accommodation. The oldest part of the building is a narrow keep, or tower, such as formed the mansion of a lesser Scottish baron; but so many additions have been made to it, that there is now a large court-yard, surrounded by buildings of different ages. The eastern front of the court is raised above a portico, and decorated with entablatures, bearing anchors. All the stones of this front are cut into diamond facets, the angular projections of which have an uncommonly rich appearance. The inside of this part of the building appears to have contained a gallery of great length, and uncommon elegance. Access was given to it by a magnificent staircase, now quite destroyed. The soffits are ornamented with twining cordage and rosettes; and the whole seems to have been far more splendid than was usual in Scottish castles. The castle belonged originally to the chancellor, sir William Crichton, and probably owed to him its first enlargement, as well as its being taken by the earl of Douglas, who imputed to Crichton's counsels the death of his predecessor earl William, beheaded in Edinburgh castle, with his brother, in 1440. It is said to have been totally demolished on that occasion; but the present state of the ruins shows the contrary. In 1483, it was garrisoned by lord Crichton, then its proprietor, against king James III, whose displeasure he had incurred by seducing his sister Margaret, in revenge, it is said, for the monarch having dishonoured his bed. From the Crichton family the castle passed to that of the Hepburns, earls Bothwell; and when the forfeitures of Stewart, the last earl Bothwell, were divided, the barony and castle of Crichton fell to the share of the earl of Buccleuch. They were afterwards the property of the Pringles of Clifton, and are now that of sir John Callander, baronet. It were to be wished the proprietor would take a little pains to preserve those splendid remains of an-

* I beg leave to quote a single instance from a very interesting passage. Sir David, recounting his attention to king James V in his infancy, is made, by the learned editor's punctuation, to say,—

> The first syllabis that thou did mute,
> Was pa, da, lyn, upon the lute;
> Then played I twenty springis perqueir,
> Quhilk was great plesour for to hear.
> Vol. i, p. 7, 257.

Mr. Chalmers does not inform us by note or glossary, what is meant by the king "*muting pa, da, lyn, upon the lute*," but any old woman in Scotland will bear witness, that pa, da, lyn, are the first efforts of a child to say, *Where's David Lindesay?* and that the subsequent words begin another sentence,—

> ——upon the lute
> Then played I twenty springis perqueir, &c.

In another place, "justing lumis," *i. e.* looms, or implements of tilting, is facetiously interpreted "playful limbs." Many such minute errors could be pointed out; but these are only mentioned incidentally, and not as diminishing the real merit of the edition.

* The record expresses, or rather is said to have expressed, the cause of forfeiture to be,—*Eo quod Leonem armorum Regem pugno violasset, dum eum de ineptiis suis admonuit.*" See *Nisbet's Heraldry*, Part iv, chap. 16; and *Lesleei Historia, ad Annum* 1515.

tiquity, which are at present used as a fold for sheep, and wintering cattle; although, perhaps, there are very few ruins in Scotland, which display so well the style and beauty of ancient castle-architecture. The castle of Crichton has a dungeon vault, called the *Massy More*. The epithet, which is not uncommonly applied to the prisons of other old castles in Scotland, is of Saracenic origin. It occurs twice in the "*Epistolæ Itinerariæ*" of Tollius: "*Carcer subterraneus, sive, ut Mauri appellant*, Mazmorras," p. 147; and again, "*Coguntur omnes captivi sub noctem in ergastula subterranea, quæ Turcæ Algerezani vocant* Mazmorras," p. 243. The same word applies to the dungeons of the ancient Moorish castles in Spain, and serves to show from what nation the Gothic style of castle-building was originally derived.

6. Earl Adam Hepburn.—P. 76.

He was the second earl of Bothwell, and fell in the field of Flodden, where, according to an ancient English poet, he distinguished himself by a furious attempt to retrieve the day:—

> Then on the Scottish part, right proud,
> The earl of Bothwell then out brast,
> And stepping forth, with stomach good,
> Into the enemies' throng he thrast;
> And *Bothwell! Bothwell!* cried bold,
> To cause his souldiers to ensue,
> But there he caught a wellcome cold,
> The Englishmen straight down him threw.
> *Flodden Field.*

Adam was grandfather to James, earl of Bothwell, too well known in the history of queen Mary.

7. For that a messenger from heaven
In vain to James had counsel given
Against the English war.—P. 76.

This story is told by Pitscottie with characteristic simplicity: "The king, seeing that France could get no support of him for that time, made a proclamation, full hastily, through all the realm of Scotland, both east and west, south and north, as well in the isles as in the firm land, to all manner of men betwixt sixty and sixteen years, that they should be ready, within twenty days, to pass with him, with forty days' victual, and to meet at the Burrow-muir of Edinburgh, and there to pass forward where he pleased. His proclamations were hastily obeyed, contrary to the council of Scotland's will; but every man loved his prince so well, that they would on no ways disobey him; but every man caused make his proclamation so hastily, conform to the charge of the king's proclamation.

"The king came to Lithgow, where he happened to be for the time at the council, very sad and dolorous, making his devotion to God, to send him good chance and fortune in his voyage. In this mean time, there came a man, clad in a blue gown, in at the kirk-door, and belted about him in a roll of linen cloth: a pair of brotikings* on his feet, to the great of his legs; with all other hose and clothes conform thereto; but he had nothing on his head, but syde† red yellow hair behind, and on his haffets,‡ which wan down to his shoulders; but his forehead was bald and bare. He seemed to be a man of two-and-fifty years, with a great pike-staff in his hand, and came first forward among the lords, crying and speiring§ for the king, saying, he desired to speak with him. While, at the last, he came where the king was sitting in the desk at his prayers; but when he saw the king, he made him little reverence or salutation, but leaned down groffling on the desk before him, and said to him in this manner, as after follows: 'Sir king, my mother hath sent me to you, desiring you not to pass, at this time, where thou art purposed; for if thou does, thou wilt not fare well in thy journey, nor none that passeth with thee. Further, she bade thee mell* with no woman, nor use their counsel, nor let them touch thy body, nor thou theirs; for, if thou do it, thou wilt be confounded and brought to shame.'

"By this man had spoken thir words unto the king's grace, the evening song was near done, and the king paused on thir words, studying to give him an answer; but, in the mean time, before the king's eyes, and in the presence of all the lords that were about him for the time, this man vanished away, and could no ways be seen nor comprehended, but vanished away as he had been a blink of the sun, or a whip of the whirlwind, and could no more be seen. I heard say, sir David Lindesay, lyon-herauld, and John Inglis the marshal, who were, at that time, young men, and special servants to the king's grace, were standing presently beside the king, who thought to have laid hands on this man, that they might have speired further tidings at him: but all for nought; they could not touch him; for he vanished away betwixt them, and was no more seen."

Buchanan, in more elegant, though not more impressive language, tells the same story, and quotes the personal information of our sir David Lindesay: "*In iis* (i. e. *qui propius astiterant*) *fuit David Lindesius, Montanus, homo spectatæ fidei et probitatis, nec a literarum studiis alienus, et cujus totius vitæ tenor longissime a mentiendo aberat; a quo nisi ego hæc, uti tradidi, pro certis accepissem, ut vulgatam vanis rumoribus fabulam omissurus eram.*"—Lib. xiii. The king's throne in St. Catherine's aisle, which he had constructed for himself, with twelve stalls for the knights companions of the order of the thistle, is still shown as the place where the apparition was seen. I know not by what means St. Andrew got the credit of having been the celebrated monitor of James IV; for the expression in Lindesay's narrative, "My mother has sent me," could only be used by St. John, the adopted son of the virgin Mary. The whole story is so well attested, that we have only the choice between a miracle or an imposture. Mr. Pinkerton plausibly argues, from the caution against incontinence, that the queen was privy to the scheme of those who had recourse to this expedient to deter king James from his impolitic warfare.

8. The wild buck bells.—P. 76.

I am glad of an opportunity to describe the cry of the deer by another word than *braying*, although the latter has been sanctified by the use of the Scottish metrical translation of the psalms. *Bell* seems to be an abbreviation of bellow. This sylvan sound conveyed great delight to our ancestors, chiefly, I suppose, from association. A gentle knight in the reign of Henry VIII, sir Thomas Wortley, built Wantley Lodge, in Wancliffe Forest, for the pleasure (as an ancient inscription testifies) of "listening to the hart's *bell*."

9. June saw his father's overthrow.—P. 76.

The rebellion against James III was signalized by the cruel circumstance of his son's presence in

* Buskins. † Long. ‡ Cheeks. § Asking.

* Meddle.

the hostile army. When the king saw his own banner displayed against him, and his son in the faction of his enemies, he lost the little courage he ever possessed, fled out of the field, fell from his horse as it started at a woman and water-pitcher, and was slain, it is not well understood by whom. James IV, after the battle, passed to Stirling, and hearing the monks of the chapel-royal deploring the death of his father, their founder, he was seized with deep remorse, which manifested itself in severe penances. See note 10, on canto V. The battle of Sauchie-burn, in which James III fell, was fought 18th June, 1488.

10. Spread all the Borough-moor below, &c.—P. 78.

The borough, or common moor of Edinburgh, was of very great extent, reaching from the southern walls of the city to the bottom of Braid Hills. It was anciently a forest; and, in that state, was so great a nuisance, that the inhabitants of Edinburgh had permission granted to them of building wooden galleries, projecting over the street, in order to encourage them to consume the timber; which they seem to have done very effectually. When James IV mustered the array of the kingdom there, in 1513, the Borough-moor was, according to Hawthornden, "a field spacious, and delightful by the shade of many stately and aged oaks." Upon that, and similar occasions, the royal standard is traditionally said to have been displayed from the hare stane, a high stone, now built into the wall, on the left hand of the highway leading towards Braid, not far from the head of Bruntsfield-links. The hare stane probably derives its name from the British word *har*, signifying an army.

11. O'er the pavilions flew.—P. 78.

I do not exactly know the Scottish mode of encampment in 1513, but Patten gives a curious description of that which he saw after the battle of Pinkie, in 1547:—"Here now to say somewhat of the manner of their camp: As they had no pavilions, or round houses, of any commendable compas, so wear there few other tentes with posts, as the used manner of making is; and of these few also, none of above twenty foot length, but most far under: for the most part all very sumptuously beset, (after their fashion,) for the love of France, with fleur-de-lys, some of blue buckram, some of black, and some of some other colours. These white ridges, as I call them, that, as we stood on Fauxsyde Bray, did make so great muster towards us, which I did take then to be a number of tentes, when we came, we found it a linen drapery, of the coarser cambryk in dede, for it was all of canvas sheets, and wear the tenticles, or rather cabyns, and couches of their soldiers; the which (much after the common building of their country beside) had they framed of four sticks, about an ell long a piece, whearof two fastened together at one end aloft, and the two endes beneath stuck in the ground, an ell asunder, standing in fashion like the bowes of a sowes yoke; over two such bowes (one, as it were, at their head, the other at their feet) they stretched a sheet down on both sides, whereby their cabin became roofed like a ridge, but skant shut at both ends, and not very close beneath on the sides, unless their sticks were the shorter, or their wives the more liberal to lend them larger napery; howbeit, when they had lined them, and stuffed them so thick with straw, with the weather as it was not very cold, when they wear ones couched, they were as warm as they had been wrapt in horses' dung."—Patten's *Account of Somerset's Expedition.*

12. ——in proud Scotland's royal shield,
The ruddy lion ramped in gold.—P. 78.

The well-known arms of Scotland. If you will believe Boethius and Buchanan, the double tressure round the shield, mentioned p. 75, *counter fleur-de-lised, or, lingued and armed azure*, was first assumed by Achaius, king of Scotland, contemporary of Charlemagne, and founder of the celebrated league with France; but later antiquaries make poor Eochy, or Achy, little better than a sort of king of Brentford, whom old Grig (who has also swelled into Gregorius Magnus) associated with himself in the important duty of governing some part of the north-eastern coast of Scotland.

NOTES TO CANTO V.

1. Caledonia's queen is changed.—P. 80.

The old town of Edinburgh was secured on the north side by a lake, now drained, and on the south by a wall, which there was some attempt to make defensible even so late as 1745. The gates, and the greater part of the wall, have been pulled down, in the course of the late extensive and beautiful enlargement of the city. Mr. Thomas Campbell proposed to celebrate Edinburgh under the epithet here borrowed. But the "queen of the north" has not been so fortunate as to receive, from so eminent a pen, the proposed distinction.

2. Flinging thy white arms to the sea.—P. 80.

Since writing this line, I find I have inadvertently borrowed it almost verbatim, though with somewhat a different meaning, from a chorus in "Caractacus:"

Britain heard the descant bold,
She flung her white arms o'er the sea,
Proud in her leafy bosom to unfold
The freight of harmony.

3. Since first, when conquering York arose,
To Henry meek she gave repose.—P. 80.

Henry VI, with his queen, his heir, and the chiefs of his family, fled to Scotland after the fatal battle of Towton. In this note a doubt was formerly expressed, whether Henry VI came to Edinburgh, though his queen certainly did; Mr Pinkerton inclining to believe that he remained at Kirkcudbright. But my noble friend, lord Napier, has pointed out to me a grant by Henry, of an annuity of forty merks to his lordship's ancestor, John Napier, subscribed by the king himself at *Edinburgh*, the 28th day of August, in the thirty-ninth year of his reign, which corresponds to the year of God 1461. This grant, Douglas, with his usual neglect of accuracy, dates in 1368. But this error being corrected from the copy in Macfarlane's MSS. p. 119, 120, removes all scepticism on the subject of Henry VI being really at Edinburgh. John Napier was son and heir of sir Alexander Napier, and about this time was provost of Edinburgh. The hospitable reception of the distressed monarch and his family called forth on Scotland the encomium of Molinet, a contemporary poet. The English people, he says,—

Ung nouveau roy creerent,
Par despiteux vouloir,
Le vieil en debouterent,
Et son legitime hoir,
Qui faytyf alla prendre
D'Escosse le garand,
De tous siecles le mendre,
Et le plus tollerant.

Recollection des Aventures.

4. ——the romantic strain,
Whose Anglo-Norman tones whilere
Could win the royal Henry's ear.—P. 80.

Mr. Ellis, in his valuable introduction to the "Specimens of Romance," has proved, by the concurring testimony of La Ravaillere, Tressan, but especially the abbe de la Rue, that the courts of our Anglo-Norman kings, rather than those of the French monarchs, produced the birth of romance literature. Marie, soon after mentioned, compiled from Armorican originals, and translated into Norman-French, or romance language, the twelve curious lays, of which Mr. Ellis has given us a *precis* in the appendix to his introduction. The story of Blondel, the famous and faithful minstrel of Richard I, needs no commentary.

5. The cloth-yard arrows flew like hail.—P. 81.

This is no poetical exaggeration. In some of the counties of England, distinguished for archery, shafts of this extraordinary length were actually used. Thus, at the battle of Blackheath, between the troops of Henry VII and the Cornish insurgents, in 1496, the bridge of Dartford was defended by a picked band of archers from the rebel army, "whose arrows," says Hollinshed, "were in length a full cloth-yard." The Scottish, according to Ascham, had a proverb, that every English archer carried under his belt twenty-four Scots, in allusion to his bundle of unerring shafts.

6. To pass, to wheel, the croupe to gain,
And high curvett, that not in vain
The sword-sway might descend amain
On foeman's casque below.—P. 81.

"The most useful *air*, as the Frenchmen term it, is *territerr*; the *courbettes*, *cabrioles*, or *un pas et un sault*, being fitter for horses of parade and triumph than for soldiers: yet I cannot deny but a *demivolte* with *courbettes*, so that they be not too high, may be useful in a fight or *meslee*, for, as Labroue hath it, in his Book of Horsemanship, monsieur de Montmorency having a horse that was excellent in performing the *demivolte*, did, with his sword, strike down two adversaries from their horses in a tourney, where divers of the prime gallants of France did meet; for, taking his time, when the horse was in the height of his *courbette*, and discharging a blow then, his sword fell with such weight and force upon the two cavaliers, one after the other, that he struck them from their horses to the ground."—*Lord Herbert of Cherbury's Life*, p. 48.

7. He saw the hardy burghers there
March armed, on foot, with faces bare.—P. 81.

The Scottish burgesses were, like yeomen, appointed to be armed with bows and sheaves, sword, buckler, knife, spear, or a good axe instead of a bow, if worth £100: their armour to be of white or bright harness. They wore *white hats*, *i. e.* bright steel caps without crest or visor. By an act of James IV, their *weapon-shawings* are appointed to be held four times a-year, under the aldermen or bailiffs.

8. On foot the yeomen too.—P. 81.

Bows and quivers were in vain recommended to the peasantry of Scotland, by repeated statutes: spears and axes seem universally to have been used instead of them. Their defensive armour was the plate-jack, hauberk, or brigantine: and their missile weapons, cross-bows and culverins. All wore swords of excellent temper, according to Patten; and a voluminous handkerchief round their neck, "not for cold, but for cutting." The mace also was much used in the Scottish army. The old poem, on the battle of Flodden, mentions a band—

Who manfully did meet their foes,
With leaden mauls, and lances long.

When the feudal array of the kingdom was called forth, each man was obliged to appear with forty days' provision. When this was expended, which took place before the battle of Flodden, the army melted away of course. Almost all the Scottish forces, except a few knights, men-at-arms, and the border prickers, who formed excellent light cavalry, acted upon foot.

9. A banquet rich, and costly wines.—P. 82.

In all transactions of great or petty importance, and among whomsoever taking place, it would seem that a present of wine was an uniform and indispensable preliminary. It was not to sir John Falstaff alone that such an introductory preface was necessary, however well judged and acceptable on the part of Mr. Brook; for sir Ralph Sadler, while on embassy to Scotland, in 1539-40, mentions with complacency, "the same night came Rothesay (the herald so called) to me again, and brought me wine from the king, both white and red."—*Clifford's edition*, p. 39.

10. ——his iron belt,
That bound his breast in penance pain,
In memory of his father slain.—P. 83.

Few readers need to be reminded of this belt, to the weight of which James added certain ounces every year that he lived. Pitscottie founds his belief, that James was not slain in the battle of Flodden, because the English never had this token of the iron-belt to show to any Scotsman. The person and character of James are delineated according to our best historians. His romantic disposition, which led him highly to relish gayety, approaching to license, was, at the same time, tinged with enthusiastic devotion. These propensities sometimes formed a strange contrast. He was wont, during his fits of devotion, to assume the dress, and conform to the rules, of the order of Franciscans: and when he had thus done penance for some time in Stirling, to plunge again into the tide of pleasure. Probably, too, with no unusual inconsistency, he sometimes laughed at the superstitious observances to which he, at other times, subjected himself. There is a very singular poem by Dunbar, seemingly addressed to James IV on one of these occasions of monastic seclusion. It is a most daring and profane parody on the services of the church of Rome, entitled,

Dunbar's dirge to the king,
Byding ower lang in Strivilling.

We that are here, in heaven's glory,
To you, that are in purgatory,
Commend us on our hearty wise;
I mean we folks in paradise,
In Edinburgh, with all merriness,
To you in Stirling, with distress,
Where neither pleasure nor delight is,
For pity this epistle wrytis, &c.

See the whole in Sibbald's collection, vol. i, p. 234.

11. Sir Hugh the Heron's wife held sway.—P. 83.

It has been already noticed, that king James' acquaintance with lady Heron of Ford did not commence until he marched into England. Our historians impute to the king's infatuated passion the delays which led to the fatal defeat of Flodden. The author of "The Genealogy of the Heron Family" endeavours, with laudable anxiety, to clear

the lady Ford from this scandal: that she came and went, however, between the armies of James and Surrey, is certain. See PINKERTON'S *History*, and the authorities he refers to, vol. ii, p. 99. Heron of Ford had been, in 1511, in some sort accessory to the slaughter of sir Robert Ker of Cessford, warden of the Middle Marches. It was committed by his brother the bastard, Lilburn, and Starked, three borderers. Lilburn, and Heron of Ford, were delivered up by Henry to James, and were imprisoned in the fortress of Fastcastle, where the former died. Part of the pretence of lady Ford's negociations with James was the liberty of her husband.

12. For the fair queen of France
Sent him a turquois ring, and glove,
And charged him, as her knight and love,
For her to break a lance.—P. 83.

"Also the queen of France wrote a love-letter to the king of Scotland, calling him her love, showing him that she had suffered much rebuke in France for the defending of his honour. She believed surely that he would recompense her again with some of his kingly support in her necessity: that is to say, that he would raise her an army, and come three foot of ground on English ground, for her sake. To that effect she sent him a ring off her finger, with fourteen thousand French crowns to pay his expenses." PITSCOTTIE, p. 110.—A turquois ring;—probably this fatal gift is, with James's sword and dagger, preserved in the college of heralds, London.

13. —Archibald Bell-the-cat.—P. 84.

Archibald Douglas, earl of Angus, a man remarkable for strength of body and mind, acquired the popular name of *Bell-the-cat*, upon the following remarkable occasion: James the third, of whom Pitscottie complains, that he delighted more in music, and "policies of building," than in hunting, hawking, and other noble exercises, was so ill advised, as to make favourites of his architects and musicians, whom the same historian irreverently terms masons and fiddlers. His nobility, who did not sympathize in the king's respect for the fine arts, were extremely incensed at the honours conferred on those persons, particularly on Cochran, a mason, who had been created earl of Mar. And seizing the opportunity, when, in 1482, the king had convoked the whole array of the country to march against the English, they held a midnight council in the church of Lauder, for the purpose of forcibly removing these minions from the king's person. When all had agreed on the propriety of the measure, lord Gray told the assembly the apologue of the mice, who had formed a resolution, that it would be highly advantageous to their community to tie a bell round the cat's neck, that they might hear her approach at a distance: but which public measure unfortunately miscarried, from no mouse being willing to undertake the task of fastening the bell. "I understand the moral," said Angus, "and, that what we propose may not lack execution, I will *bell the cat*." The rest of the strange scene is thus told by Pitscottie;—

"By this was advised and spoken by their lords aforesaid, Cochran, the earl of Mar, came from the king to the council, (which council was holden in the kirk of Lauder for the time,) who was well accompanied with a band of men of war, to the number of three hundred light axes, all clad in white livery, and black bends thereon, that they might be known for Cochran earl of Mar's men. Himself was clad in a riding-pie of black velvet, with a great chain of gold about his neck, to the value of five hundred crowns, and four blowing horns, with both the ends of gold and silk, set with a precious stone, called a beryl, hanging in the midst. This Cochran had his heumont borne before him, overgilt with gold; and so were all the rest of his horns, and all his pallions were of fine canvas of silk, and the cords thereof fine twined silk, and the chains upon his pallions were double overgilt with gold.

"This Cochran was so proud in his conceit, that he counted no lords to be marrows to him; therefore he rushed rudely at the kirk door. The council inquired who it was that perturbed them at that time. Sir Robert Douglas, laird of Lochleven, was keeper of the kirk door at that time, who inquired who that was that knocked so rudely? And Cochran answered, 'This is I, the earl of Mar.' The which news pleased well the lords, because they were ready boun to cause take him, as is afore rehearsed. Then the earl of Angus past hastily to the door, and with him sir Robert Douglas of Lochleven, to receive in the earl of Mar, and so many of his accomplices who were there, as they thought good. And the earl of Angus met with the earl of Mar, as he came in at the door, and pulled the golden chain from his craig, and said to him, a tow* would set him better. Sir Robert Douglas syne pulled the blowing-horn from him in like manner, and said, 'He had been the hunter of mischief over long.' This Cochran asked, 'my lords, is it mows,† or earnest?' They answered, and said, 'It is good earnest, and so thou shalt find: for thou and thy complices have abused our prince this long time; of whom thou shalt have no more credence, but shall have thy reward according to thy good service, as thou hast deserved in times by past; right so the rest of thy followers.'

"Notwithstanding, the lords held them quiet till they caused certain armed men to pass into the king's pallion, and two or three wise men to pass with them, and give the king fair pleasant words, till they laid hands on all the kings servants, and took them and hanged them before his eyes over the bridge of Lawder. Incontinent they brought forth Cochran, and his hands bound with a tow, who desired them to take one of his own pallion tows and bind his hands, for he thought shame to have his hands bound with such a tow of hemp, like a thief. The lords answered, he was a traitor, he deserved no better; and, for despight, they took a hair tether,‡ and hanged him over the bridge of Lawder, above the rest of his complices."—*Pitscottie*, p. 78, folio edit.

14. Against the war had Angus stood,
And chafed his royal lord.—P. 84.

Angus was an old man when the war against England was resolved upon. He earnestly spoke against that measure from its commencement; and, on the eve of the battle of Flodden, remonstrated so freely on the impolicy of fighting, that the king said to him, with scorn and indignation, "If he was afraid, he might go home." The earl burst into tears at this insupportable insult, and retired accordingly, leaving his sons, George, master of Angus, and sir William of Glenbervie, to command his followers. They were both slain in the battle, with two hundred gentleman of the name of Dou-

* Rope. † Jest. ‡ Halter

glas. The aged earl, broken-hearted at the calamities of his house and country, retired into a religious house, where he died about a year after the field of Flodden.

15. Then rest you in Tantallon hold.—P. 84.

The ruins of Tantallon castle occupy a high rock protecting into the German ocean, about two miles east of North Berwick. The building is not seen till a close approach, as there is rising ground betwixt it and the land. The circuit is of large extent, fenced upon three sides by the precipice which overhangs the sea, and on the fourth by a double ditch and very strong outworks. Tantallon was a principal castle of the Douglas family, and when the earl of Angus was banished, in 1527, it continued to hold out against James V. The king went in person against it, and, for its reduction, borrowed from the castle of Dunbar, then belonging to the duke of Albany, two great cannons, whose names, as Pitscottie informs us with laudable minuteness, were "Thrawn-mouth'd Mow and her Marrow;" also, "two great botcards, and two moyan, two double falcons, and four quarter falcons;" for the safe guiding and re-delivery of which, three lords were laid in pawn at Dunbar. Yet, notwithstanding all this apparatus, James was forced to raise the siege, and only afterwards obtained possession of Tantallon by treaty with the governor, Simeon Panango. When the earl of Angus returned from banishment, upon the death of James, he again obtained possession of Tantallon, and it actually afforded refuge to an English ambassador, under circumstances similar to those described in the text. This was no other than the celebrated sir Ralph Sadler, who resided there for some time under Angus's protection, after the failure of his negotiation, for matching the infant Mary with Edward VI. He says, that though this place was poorly furnished, it was of such strength as might warrant him against the malice of his enemies, and that he now thought himself out of danger.*

There is a military tradition, that the old Scottish march was meant to express the words,

Ding down Tantallon,
Mak a brig to the Bass.

Tantallon was at length "dung down" and ruined by the covenanters; its lord, the marquis of Douglas, being a favourer of the royal cause. The castle and barony were sold in the beginning of the eighteenth century to president Dalrymple of North Berwick, by the then marquis of Douglas.

16. ——their motto on his blade.—P. 84.

A very ancient sword, in possession of lord Douglas, bears, among a great deal of flourishing, two hands pointing to a heart which is placed betwixt them, and the date 1329, being the year in which Bruce charged the good lord Douglas to carry his heart to the holy land. The following lines (the first couplet of which is quoted by Godscroft, as a popular saying in his time) are inscribed around the emblem:

So mony guid as of ye Douglas beinge,
Of ane surname was ne'er in Scotland seine.

I will ye charge, efter yat I depart,
To holy grawe, and there bury my hart;

Let it remaine ever *bothe tyme* and *howr*
To ye last day I sie my Saviour.

I do protest in tyme of al my ringe,
Ye lyk subject had never ony keing.

This curious and valuable relique was nearly lost during the civil war of 1745-6, being carried away from Douglas castle by some of those in arms for prince Charles. But great interest having been made by the duke of Douglas among the chief partisans of Stuart, it was at length restored. It resembles a highland claymore of the usual size, is of an excellent temper, and admirably poised.

17. —Martin Swart.—P. 85.

The name of this German general is preserved by that of the field of battle, which is called, after him, Swart-moor.—There were songs about him long current in England.—See dissertation prefixed to *Ritson's Ancient Songs*, 1792, page lxi.

18. Perchance some form was unobserved:
Perchance in prayer, or faith, he swerved.—P. 85.

It was early necessary for those who felt themselves obliged to believe in the divine judgment being enunciated in the trial by duel, to find salvos for the strange and obviously precarious chances of the combat. Various curious evasive shifts, used by those who took up an unrighteous quarrel, were supposed sufficient to convert it into a just one. Thus, in the romance of "Amys and Amelion," the one brother-in-arms, fighting for the other, disguised in his armour, swears that *he* did not commit the crime of which the steward, his antagonist, truly, though maliciously, accused him whom he represented. Brantome tells a story of an Italian who entered the lists upon an unjust quarrel, but, to make his cause good, fled from his enemy at the first onset. "Turn, coward!" exclaimed his antagonist. "Thou liest," said the Italian, "coward am I none; and in this quarrel will I fight to the death, but my first cause of combat was unjust, and I abandon it." "*Je vous laisse a penser*," adds Brantome, "*s'il n'y a pas de l'abus la.*" Elsewhere, he says, very sensibly, upon the confidence which those who had a righteous cause entertained of victory; "*Un autre abus y avoit-il, que ceux qui avoient un juste subjet de querelle, et qu'on les faisoit jurer avant entrer au camp, pensoient estre aussitost vainqueurs, voire s'en assuroient-ils du tout, mesme que leurs confesseurs, parrains, et confidants leurs en respondoient tout-a-fait, comme si Dieu lear en eust donne une patente; et ne regardant point a d'autres fautes passees, et que Dieu en garde la punition a ce coup la pour plus grande, despiteuse, et exemplaire.*"—Discours sur les Duels.

19. Dun-Edin's cross.—P. 86.

The cross of Edinburgh was an ancient and curious structure. The lower part was an octagonal tower, sixteen feet in diameter, and about fifteen feet high. At each angle there was a pillar, and between them an arch, of the Grecian shape. Above these was a projecting battlement, with a turret at each corner, and medallions, of rude but curious workmanship, between them. Above these rose the proper cross, a column of one stone, upwards of twenty feet high, surmounted with a unicorn. The pillar is preserved at the house of Drum, near Edinburgh. The magistrates of Edinburgh, in 1756, with consent of the lords of Session, (*proh pudor!*) destroyed this curious monument, under a wanton pretext that it incumbered the street; while, on the one hand, they left an ugly mass, called the Luckenbooths, and, on the other, an

* The very curious state papers of this able negotiator have been lately published by Mr. Clifford, with some notes by the author of *Marmion*.

awkward, long, and low guard-house, which were fifty times more incumbrance than the venerable and inoffensive cross.

From the tower of the cross, so long as it remained, the heralds published the acts of parliament; and its site, marked by radii, diverging from a stone centre in the High Street, is still the place where proclamations are made.

20. This awful summons came.—P. 86.

This supernatural citation is mentioned by all our Scottish historians. It was probably, like the apparition of Linlithgow, an attempt, by those averse to the war, to impose upon the superstitious temper of James IV. The following account from Pitscottie is characteristically minute, and furnishes, besides, some curious particulars of the equipment of the army of James IV. I need only add to it, that Plotcock, or Plutock, is no other than Pluto. The Christians of the middle ages by no means disbelieved in the existence of the heathen deities: they only considered them as devils;* and Plotcock, so far from implying any thing fabulous, was a synonyme of the grand enemy of mankind. "Yet all their warnings, and uncouth tidings, nor no good counsel, might stop the king, at this present, from his vain purpose, and wicked enterprise, but hasted him fast to Edinburgh, and there to make his provisions and furnishing, in having forth of his army against the day appointed, that they should meet in the Burrow-muir of Edinburgh; that is to say, seven cannons that he had forth of the castle of Edinburgh, which were called the Seven Sisters, casten by Robert Borthwick, the master-gunner, with other small artillery, bullet, powder, and all manner of order, as the master-gunner could devise.

"In this mean time, when they were taking forth their artillery, and the king being in the abbey for the time, there was a cry heard at the market-cross of Edinburgh, at the hour of midnight, proclaiming as it had been a summons, which was named and called by the proclaimer thereof, The Summons of Plotcock; which desired all men to compear, both earl, and lord, and baron, and all honest gentlemen within the town, (every man specified by his own name,) to compear, within the space of forty days, before his master, where it should happen him to appoint, and be for the time under the pain of disobedience. But whether this summons was proclaimed by vain persons, night-waikers, or drunken men, for their pastime, or if it was a spirit, I cannot tell truly; but it was shown to me, that an indweller of the town, Mr. Richard Lawson, being evil-disposed, ganging in his gallery-stair foreanent the cross, hearing this voice proclaiming this summons, thought marvel what it should be, cried on his servant to bring him his purse; and when he had brought him it, he took out a crown, and cast over the stair, saying, I appeal from that summons, judgment, and sentence thereof, and takes me all whole in the mercy of God, and Christ Jesus his Son. Verily, the author of this, that caused me write the manner of the summons, was a landed gentleman, who was at that time twenty years of age, and was in the town the time of the said summons; and thereafter, when the field was stricken, he swore to me, there was no man that escaped that was called in this summons, but that one man alone which made his protestation, and appealed from the said summons: but all the lave were perished in the field with the king."

21. Fitz-Eustace bade them pause awhile
Before a venerable pile.—P. 87.

The convent alluded to is a foundation of Cistertian nuns, near North Berwick, of which there are still some remains. It was founded by Duncan, earl of Fife, in 1216.

22. That one of his own ancestry
Drove the monks forth of Coventry.—P. 88.

This relates to the catastrophe of a real Robert de Marmion, in the reign of king Stephen, whom William of Newbury describes with some attributes of my fictitious hero: "*Homo bellicosus, ferocia, et astutia, fere nullo suo tempore impar.*" This baron, having expelled the monks from the church of Coventry, was not long experiencing the divine judgment, as the same monks no doubt termed his disaster. Having waged a feudal war with the earl of Chester, Marmion's horse fell, as he charged in the van of his troop, against a body of the earl's followers: the rider's thigh being broken by the fall, his head was cut off by a common foot-soldier, ere he could receive any succour. The whole story is told by William of Newbury.

NOTES TO CANTO VI.

1. ——the savage Dane
At Iol more deep the mead did drain.—P. 89.

The Iol of the heathen Danes, (a word still applied to Christmas in Scotland,) was solemnized with great festivity. The humour of the Danes at table displayed itself in pelting each other with bones; and Torfæus tells a long and curious story, in the history of Hrolfe Kraka, of one Huttus, an inmate of the court of Denmark, who was so generally assailed with these missiles, that he constructed, out of the bones with which he was overwhelmed, a very respectable entrenchment, against those who continued the raillery. The dances of the northern warriors round the great fires of pine-trees are commemorated by Olaus Magnus, who says, they danced with such fury, holding each other by the hands, that, if the grasp of any failed, he was pitched into the fire with the velocity of a sling. The sufferer, on such occasions, was instantly plucked out, and obliged to quaff off a certain measure of ale, as a penalty for "spoiling the king's fire."

2. On christmas eve the mass was sung.—P. 89.

In Roman Catholic countries, mass is never said at night, excepting on christmas eve. Each of the frolics, with which that holiday used to be celebrated, might admit of a long and curious note; but I shall content myself with the following description of christmas, and his attributes, as personified in one of Ben Jonson's masques for the court.

"*Enter* christmas, *with two or three of the guard.* He is attired in round hose, long stockings, a close doublet, a high-crowned hat, with a brooch, a long thin beard, a truncheon, little ruffs, white shoes, his scarfs and garters tied across, and his drum beaten before him.

* See, on this curious subject, the essay on Fairies, in the "Border Minstrelsy," vol. ii, under the fourth head; also Jackson on unbelief, p. 175. Chaucer calls Pluto the "king of Faerie;" and Dunbar names him "Pluto, that elrich incubus." If he was not actually the devil, he must be considered as the "prince of the power of the air." The most remarkable instance of these surviving classical superstitions, is that of the Germans, concerning the Hill of Venus, into which she attempts to entice all gallant knights, and detains them in a sort of Fool's Paradise.

"The names of his children, with their attires.

"*Miss-rule*, in a velvet cap, with a sprig, a short cloak, great yellow ruff, like a reveller; his torch-bearer bearing a rope, a cheese, and a basket.

"*Caroll*, a long tawny coat, with a red cap, and a flute at his girdle; his torch-bearer carrying a song-book open.

"*Minced pie*, like a fine cook's wife, drest neat, her man carrying a pie, dish, and spoons.

"*Gamboll*, like a tumbler, with a hoop and bells; his torch-bearer armed with a cole-staff, and blinding cloth.

"*Post and pair*, with a pair-royal of aces in his hat, his garment all done over with pairs and purs; his squire carrying a box, cards, and counters.

"*New-year's-gift*, in a blue coat, serving-man like, with an orange, and a sprig of rosemary gilt on his head, his hat full of brooches, with a collar of gingerbread; his torch-bearer carrying a march-pain, with a bottle of wine on either arm.

"*Mumming*, in a masquing pied suit, with a visor; his torch-bearer carrying the box, and ringing it.

"*Wassal*, like a neat sempster and sowgster; her page bearing a brown bowl, dressed with ribbons, and rosemary, before her.

"*Offering*, in a short gown, with a porter's staff in his hand; a wyth borne before him, and a basin, by his torch-bearer.

"*Baby Cocke*, drest like a boy, in a fine long coat, biggin, bib, muckender, and a little dagger; his usher bearing a great cake, with a bean and a pease."

3. Who lists may in their mumming see
Traces of ancient mystery.—P. 89.

It seems certain, that the mummers of England, who (in Northumberland at least) used to go about in disguise to the neighbouring houses, bearing the then useless ploughshare; and the *Guisards* of Scotland, not yet in total disuse, present, in some indistinct degree, a shadow of the old mysteries, which were the origin of the English drama. In Scotland (*me ipso teste*) we were wont, during my boyhood, to take the characters of the apostles, at least of Peter, Paul, and Judas Iscariot; the first had the keys, the second carried a sword, and the last the bag, in which the dole of our neighbours' plum-cake was deposited. One played a champion, and recited some traditional rhymes; another was

——Alexander, king of Macedon,
Who conquer'd all the world but Scotland alone;
When he came to Scotland his courage grew cold,
To see a little nation so courageous and bold.

These, and many such verses, were repeated, but by rote, and unconnectedly. There was also occasionally, I believe, a saint George. In all, there was a confused resemblance of the ancient mysteries, in which the characters of Scripture, the nine worthies, and other popular personages, were usually exhibited. It were much to be wished, that the Chester mysteries were published from the MS. in the museum, with the annotations which a diligent investigator of popular antiquities might still supply. The late acute and valuable antiquary, Mr. Ritson, showed me several memoranda towards such a task, which are probably now dispersed or lost. See, however, his *Remarks on Shakspeare*, 1783, p. 38.

4. Where my great grandsire came of old,
With amber beard, and flaxen hair.—P. 89.

Mr. Scott, of Harden, my kind and affectionate friend and distant relation, has the original of a poetical invitation, addressed from his grandfather to my relative, from which a few lines in the text are imitated. They are dated, as the epistle in the text, from Mertoun house, the seat of the Harden family.

"With amber beard, and flaxen hair,
And reverend apostolic air,
Free of anxiety and care,
Come hither, christmas-day, and dine;
We'll mix sobriety with wine,
And easy mirth with thoughts divine.
We christians think it holiday,
On it no sin to feast or play;
Others, in spite, may fast or pray.
No superstition in the use
Our ancestors made of a goose;
Why may not we, as well as they,
Be innocently blith that day,
On goose or pie, on wine or ale,
And scorn enthusiastic zeal?—
Pray come, and welcome, or plague rot
Your friend and landlord, William Scott."
Mr. Walter Scott, Lessudden.

The venerable old gentleman, to whom the lines are addressed, was the younger brother of William Scott of Raeburn. Being the cadet of a cadet of the Harden family, he had very little to lose; yet he contrived to lose the small property he had, by engaging in the civil wars and intrigues of the house of Stuart. His veneration for the exiled family was so great, that he swore he would not shave his beard till they were restored: a mark of attachment, which, I suppose, had been common during Cromwell's usurpation; for, in Cowley's "Cutter of Coleman-street," one drunken cavalier upbraids another, that, when he was not able to afford to pay a barber, he affected to "wear a beard for the king." I sincerely hope this was not absolutely the original reason of my ancestor's beard; which, as appears from a portrait in the possession of sir Henry Hay Macdougal, bart. and another painted for the famous Dr. Pitcairn,* was a beard of a most dignified and venerable appearance.

5. —the spirit's blasted tree.—P. 90.

I am permitted to illustrate this passage, by inserting "*Ceubren yr Ellyll*, or the Spirit's Blasted Tree," a legendary tale, by the reverend George Warrington:

"The event on which this tale is founded, is preserved by tradition in the family of the Vaughans of Henwyrt: nor is it entirely lost, even among the common people, who still point out this oak to the passenger. The enmity between the two Welch chieftains, Howel Sele, and Owen Glyndwr, was extreme, and marked by vile treachery in the one, and ferocious cruelty in the other.† The story is somewhat changed and softened, as more favourable to the characters of the two chiefs, and as better answering the purpose of poetry, by admitting the passion of pity, and a greater degree of sentiment in the description. Some trace of Howel Sele's mansion was to be seen a few years ago, and may perhaps be still visible, in the park of Nannau, now belonging to sir Robert Vaughan, baronet, in the wild and romantic tracts of Merionethshire. The abbey mentioned passes under two names, Vener and Cymmer. The former is retained, as more generally used."

* The old gentleman was an intimate of this celebrated genius. By the favour of the late earl of Kelly, descended on the maternal side from Dr. Pitcairn, my father became possessed of the portrait in question.

† The history of their feud may be found in Pennant's Tour in Wales.

THE SPIRIT'S BLASTED TREE.

Ceubren yr Ellyll.

Through Nannau's chase as Howel pass'd,
A chief esteem'd both brave and kind,
Far distant borne, the stag-hound's cry
Came murmuring on the hollow wind.

Starting, he bent an eager ear,—
How should the sounds return again?
His hounds lay wearied from the chase,
And all at home his hunter train.

Then sudden anger flash'd his eye,
And deep revenge he vow'd to take,
On that bold man who dared to force
His red deer from the forest brake.

Unhappy chief! would nought avail,
No signs impress thy heart with fear,
Thy lady's dark mysterious dream,
Thy warning from the hoary seer?

Three ravens gave the note of death,
As through mid air they wing'd their way;
Then o'er his head, in rapid flight,
They croak,—they scent their destined prey.

Ill-omen'd bird! as legends say,
Who hast the wond'rous power to know,
While health fills high the throbbing veins,
The fated hour when blood must flow.

Blinded by rage, alone he pass'd,
Nor sought his ready vassals' aid;
But what his fate lay long unknown,
For many an anxious year delay'd.

A peasant mark'd his angry eye,
He saw him reach the lake's dark bourne,
He saw him near a blasted oak,
But never from that hour return.

Three days pass'd o'er, no tidings came;—
Where should the chief his steps delay?
With wild alarm the servants ran,
Yet knew not where to point their way.

His vassals ranged the mountain's height,
The covert close, the wide spread plain;
But all in vain their eager search,
They ne'er must see their lord again.

Yet fancy, in a thousand shapes,
Bore to his home the chief once more:
Some saw him on high Moel's top,
Some saw him on the winding shore.

With wonder fraught, the tale went round,
Amazement chain'd the hearer's tongue;
Each peasant felt his own sad loss,
Yet fondly o'er the story hung.

Oft by the moon's pale shadowy light,
His aged nurse, and steward gray,
Would lean to catch the storied sounds,
Or mark the flitting spirit stray.

Pale lights on Cader's rocks were seen,
And midnight voices heard to moan;
'T was even said the blasted oak,
Convulsive, heaved a hollow groan

And, to this day, the peasant still,
With cautious fear avoids the ground;
In each wild branch a spectre sees,
And trembles at each rising sound.

Ten annual suns had held their course,
In summer's smile, or winter's storm;
The lady shed the widow'd tear,
As oft she traced his manly form.

Yet still to hope her heart would cling,
As o'er the mind illusions play,—
Of travel fond, perhaps her lord
To distant lands had steered his way.

'Twas now November's cheerless hour,
Which drenching rains and cloud's deface;
Dreary bleak Robell's track appeared,
And dull and dank each valley's space.

Loud o'er the wier the hoarse flood fell,
And dashed the foaming spray on high;
The west wind bent the forest tops,
And angry frowned the evening sky.

A stranger pass'd Llanelltid's bourne,
His dark gray steed with sweat besprent,
Which, wearied with the lengthen'd way,
Could scarcely gain the hill's ascent.

The portal reach'd—the iron bell
Loud sounded round the outward wall;
Quick sprung the warder to the gate,
To know what meant the clam'rous call.

"O! lead me to your lady soon;
Say,—it is my sad lot to tell,
To clear the fate of that brave knight,
She long has prov'd she lov'd so well."

Then, as he cross'd the spacious hall,
The menials look surprise and fear;
Still o'er his harp old Modred hung,
And touch'd the notes for grief's worn ear.

The lady sat amidst her train;
A mellow'd sorrow mark'd her look:
Then, asking what this mission meant,
The graceful stranger sigh'd and spoke:—

"O could I spread one ray of hope,
One moment raise thy soul from wo,
Gladly my tongue would tell its tale,
My words at ease unfetter'd flow!

"Now, lady, give attention due,
The story claims thy full belief:
E'en in the worst events of life,
Suspense remov'd is some relief.

"Though worn by care, see Madoc here,
Great Glyndwr's friend, thy kindred's foe;
Ah, let his name no anger raise,
For now that mighty chief lies low!

"E'en from the day, when, chain'd by fate,
By wizard's dream, or potent spell,
Lingering from sad Salopia's field,
'Reft of *his* aid the Percy fell;—

"E'en from that day misfortune still,
As if for violated faith,
Pursued him with unwearied step,
Vindictive still for Hotspur's death.

"Vanquish'd at length, the Glyndwr fled,
Where winds the Wye her devious flood;
To find a casual shelter there,
In some lone cot, or desert wood.

"Clothed in a shepherd's humble guise,
He gain'd by toil his scanty bread;
He who had Cambria's sceptre borne,
And her brave sons to glory led!

"To penury extreme, and grief,
The chieftain fell a lingering prey;
I heard his last few faltering words,
Such as with pain I now convey.

"'To Sele's sad widow bear the tale,
'Nor let our horrid secret rest;
'Give but *his* corse to sacred earth,
'Then may my parting soul be blest.'—

"Dim wax'd the eye that fiercely shone,
And faint the tongue that proudly spoke,
And weak that arm, still raised to me,
Which oft had dealt the mortal stroke.

"How could I *then* his mandate bear?
Or how his last behest obey?
A rebel deem'd, with him I fled;
With him I shunn'd the light of day.

"Proscribed by Henry's hostile rage,
My country lost, despoil'd my land,
Desperate, I fled my native soil,
And fought on Syria's distant strand.

"O, had thy long-lamented lord
The holy cross and banner view'd,
Died in the sacred cause! who fell
Sad victim of a private feud!

"Led by the ardour of the chase,
Far distant from his own domain;
From where Garthmaelan spreads her shades
The Glyndwr sought the opening plain.

"With head aloft and antlers wide,
A red buck roused then cross'd in view;
Stung with the sight, and wild with rage,
Swift from the wood fierce Howel flew.

"With bitter taunt, and keen reproach,
He, all impetuous, pour'd his rage;
Reviled the chief as weak in arms,
And bade him loud the battle wage.

"Glyndwr for once restrained his sword,
And, still averse, the fight delays;
But soften'd words, like oil to fire,
Made anger more intensely blaze.

"They fought; and doubtful long the fray!
The Glyndwr gave the fatal wound!—
Still mournful must my tale proceed,
And its last act all dreadful sound.

"How could we hope for wish'd retreat,
His eager vassals ranging wide?
His bloodhounds' keen sagacious scent,
O'er many a trackless mountain tried?

"I mark'd a broad and blasted oak,
Scorch'd by the lightning's livid glare;
Hollow its stem from branch to root,
And all its shrivell'd arms were bare.

"Be this, I cried, his proper grave!—
(The thought in me was deadly sin,)
Aloft we raised the hapless chief,
And dropp'd his bleeding corpse within."

A shriek from all the damsels hurst,
That pierced the vaulted roofs below;
While horror-struck the lady stood,
A living form of sculptured wo.

With stupid stare, and vacant gaze,
Full on his face her eyes were cast,
Absorb'd!—she lost her present grief,
And faintly thought of things long past.

Like wild-fire o'er a mossy heath,
The rumour through the hamlet ran;
The peasants crowd at morning dawn,
To hear the tale,—behold the man.

He lead them near the blasted oak,
Then, conscious, from the scene withdrew,
The peasants work with trembling haste,
And lay the whiten'd bones to view!—

Back they recoil'd—the right hand still,
Contracted, grasp'd the rusty sword;
Which erst in many a battle gleam'd,
And proudly deck'd their slaughter'd lord.

They bore the corse to Vener's shrine,
With holy rites and prayers address'd;
Nine white-robed monks the last dirge sang,
And gave the angry spirit rest.

6. The highlander———————
— — — — —
Will, on a Friday morn, look pale,
If ask'd to tell a fairy tale.—P. 90.

The *Daoine shi'*, or *men of peace*, of the Scottish highlanders, rather resemble the Scandinavian *duergar* than the English fairies. Notwithstanding their name, they are, if not absolutely malevolent, at least peevish, discontented, and apt to do mischief on slight provocation. The belief of their existence is deeply impressed on the highlanders, who think they are particularly offended with mortals, who talk of them, who wear their favourite colour, green, or in any respect interfere with their affairs. This is especially to be avoided on Friday, when, whether as dedicated to Venus, with whom, in Germany, this subterraneous people are held nearly connected, or for a more solemn reason, they are more active, and possessed of greater power. Some curious particulars concerning the popular superstitions of the highlanders, may be found in Dr. Graham's Picturesque Sketches of Perthshire.

7.———the towers of Franchemont.—P. 90.

The journal of the friend to whom the fourth canto of the poem is inscribed, furnished me with the following account of a striking superstition.

"Passed the pretty little village of Franchemont, (near Spaw,) with the romantic ruins of the old castle of the counts of that name. The road leads through many delightful vales, on a rising ground; at the extremity of one of them, stands the ancient castle, now the subject of many superstitious legends. It is firmly believed by the neighbouring peasantry, that the last baron of Franchemont deposited, in one of the vaults of the castle, a ponderous chest, containing an immense treasure in gold and silver, which, by some magic spell, was intrusted to the care of the devil, who is constantly found sitting on the chest in the shape of a huntsman. Any one adventurous enough to touch the chest is instantly seized with the palsy. Upon one occasion, a priest of noted piety was brought to the vault: he used all the arts of exorcism to persuade his infernal majesty to vacate his seat, but in vain; the huntsman remained immovable. At last, moved by the earnestness of the priest, he told him, that he would agree to resign the chest, if the exorciser would sign his name with blood. But the priest understood his meaning, and refused, as by that act he would have delivered over his soul to the devil. Yet if any body can discover the mystic words used by the person who deposited the treasure, and pronounce them, the fiend must instantly decamp. I had many stories of a similar nature from a peasant, who had himself seen the devil, in the shape of a great cat."

8. The very form of Hilda fair,
Hovering upon the sunny air.—P. 91.

"I shall only produce one instance more of the great veneration paid to lady Hilda, which still prevails even in these our days; and that is, the constant opinion that she rendered, and still renders, herself visible, on some occasions in the abbey of Streanshalh, or Whitby, where she so long resided. At a particular time of the year (viz. in the summer months,) at ten or eleven in the forenoon, the sun-beams fall in the inside of the northern part of the choir; and 'tis then that the spectators, who stand on the west side of Whitby church-yard, so as just to see the most northerly part of the abbey past the north end of Whitby church, imagine they perceive, in one of the highest windows there, the resemblance of a woman arrayed in a shroud. Though we are certain this is only a reflection, caused by the splendour of the sun-beams, yet fame reports it, and it is constantly believed among the vulgar, to be an appearance of lady Hilda in her shroud, or rather in a glorified state; before which, I make no doubt, the papists, even in these our days, offer up their prayers with as much zeal and devotion, as before any other image of their most glorified saint."—Charlton's *History of Whitby*, p. 53.

9. A bishop by the altar stood.—P. 93.

The well known Gawain Douglas, bishop of Dunkeld, son of Archibald Bell-the-cat, earl of Angus. He was author of a Scottish metrical version of the Æneid, and of many other poetical pieces of great merit. He had not at this period attained the mitre.

10. —— the huge and sweeping brand
Which wont, of yore, in battle-fray,
His foemen's limbs to shred away,
As wood-knife lops the sapling spray.—P. 93.

Angus had strength and personal activity corresponding to his courage. Spens of Kilspindie, a favourite of James IV, having spoken of him lightly, the earl met him while hawking, and, compelling him to single combat, at one blow cut asun-

der his thigh bone, and killed him on the spot. But ere he could obtain James's pardon for this slaughter, Angus was obliged to yield his castle of Hermitage, in exchange for that of Bothwell, which was some diminution to the family greatness. The sword, with which he struck so remarkable a blow, was presented by his descendant, James, earl of Morton, afterwards regent of Scotland, to lord Lindesay of the Byres, when he defied Bothwell to single combat on Carberry-hill.—See Introduction to the *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*, p. 9.

11. And hopest thou hence unscathed to go?—
No, by St. Bride of Bothwell, no!
Up drawbridge, grooms,—what, warder, ho!
Let the portcullis fall.—P. 93.

This ebullition of violence in the potent earl of Angus is not without its example in the real history of the house of Douglas, whose chieftains possessed the ferocity, with the heroic virtues, of a savage state. The most curious instance occurred in the case of Maclellan, tutor of Bomby, who, having refused to acknowledge the pre-eminence claimed by Douglas over the gentlemen and barons of Galloway, was seized and imprisoned by the earl in his castle of the Thrieve, on the borders of Kirkcudbright-shire. Sir Patrick Gray, commander of king James the second's guard, was uncle to the tutor of Bomby, and obtained from the king a "sweet letter of supplication," praying the earl to deliver his prisoner into Gray's hand. When sir Patrick arrived at the castle, he was received with all the honour due to a favourite servant of the king's household; but while he was at dinner, the earl, who suspected his errand, caused his prisoner to be led forth and beheaded. After dinner, sir Patrick presented the king's letter to the earl, who received it with great affectation of reverence; "and took him by the hand, and led him forth to the green, where the gentleman was lying dead, and showed him the manner, and said, 'Sir Patrick, you are come a little too late; yonder is your sister's son lying, but he wants the head: take his body and do with it what you will.' Sir Patrick answered again with a sore heart, and said, My lord, if ye have taken from him his head, dispone upon the body as ye please: and with that called for his horse, and leaped thereon; and when he was on horseback, he said to the earl on this manner, My lord, if I live, you shall be rewarded for your labours, that you have used at this time, according to your demerits.

"At this saying the earl was highly offended, and cried for horse. Sir Patrick, seeing the earl's fury, spurred his horse, but he was chased near Edinburgh ere they left him; and had it not been his led horse was so tried and good, he had been taken."—*Pitscottie's History*, p. 39.

12. A letter forged! St. Jude to speed!
Did ever knight so foul a deed?—P. 94.

Lest the reader should partake of the earl's astonishment, and consider the crime as inconsistent with the manners of the period, I have to remind him of the numerous forgeries (partly executed by a female assistant) devised by Robert of Artois, to forward his suit against the countess Matilda; which, being detected, occasioned his flight into England, and proved the remote cause of Edward the third's memorable wars in France. John Hardinge, also, was expressly hired by Edward IV, to forge such documents as might appear to establish the claim of fealty asserted over Scotland by the English monarchs.

13. Where Lennel's convent closed their march.—P. 94.

This was a Cistertian house of religion, now almost entirely demolished. Lennel house is now the residence of my venerable friend Patrick Brydone, esquire, so well known in the literary world. It is situated near Coldstream, almost opposite to Cornhill, and consequently very near to Flodden field.

14. The Till by Twisel bridge.—P. 94.

On the evening previous to the memorable battle of Flodden, Surrey's head-quarters were at Barmoor-wood, and king James held an inaccessible position on the ridge of Flodden-hill, one of the last and lowest eminences detached from the ridge of Cheviot. The Till, a deep and slow river, winded between the armies. On the morning of the ninth September, 1513, Surrey marched in a northwesterly direction, and crossed the Till, with his van and artillery, at Twisel bridge, nigh where that river joins the Tweed, his rear-guard column passing about a mile higher, by a ford. This movement had the double effect of placing his army between king James and his supplies from Scotland, and of striking the Scottish monarch with surprise, as he seems to have relied on the depth of the river in his front. But as the passage, both over the bridge and through the ford, was difficult and slow, it seems possible that the English might have been attacked to great advantage while struggling with these natural obstacles. I know not if we are to impute James's forbearance to want of military skill, or to the romantic declaration which Pitscottie puts in his mouth, "that he was determined to have his enemies before him on a plain field," and therefore would suffer no interruption to be given, even by artillery, to their passing the river.

The ancient bridge of Twisel, by which the English crossed the Till, is still standing beneath Twisel castle, a splendid pile of Gothic architecture, as now rebuilt by sir Francis Blake, bart. whose extensive plantations have so much improved the country round. The glen is romantic and delightful, with steep banks on each side, covered with copse, particularly with hawthorn. Beneath a tall rock, near the bridge, is a plentiful fountain, called St. Helen's well.

15. Hence might they see the full array
Of either host, for deadly fray.—P. 95.

The reader cannot here expect a full account of the battle of Flodden; but, so far as is necessary to understand the romance, I beg to remind him, that when the English army, by their skilful countermarch, were fairly placed between king James and his own country, the Scottish monarch resolved to fight; and, setting fire to his tents, descended from the ridge of Flodden to secure the neighbouring eminence of Brankstone, on which that village is built. Thus the two armies met, almost without seeing each other, when, according to the old poem of "Flodden Field,"

The English line stretch'd east and west,
And southward were their faces set;
The Scottish northward proudly prest,
And manfully their foes they met.

The English army advanced in four divisions. On the right, which first engaged, were the sons of earl Surrey, namely, Thomas Howard, the admiral of England, and sir Edmund, the knight marshal of the army. Their divisions were separated from each other; but, at the request of sir Edmund,

his brother's battalion was drawn very near to his own. The centre was commanded by Surrey in person; and the left wing by sir Edward Stanley, with the men of Lancashire, and of the palatinate of Chester. Lord Dacre, with a large body of horse, formed a reserve. When the smoke, which the wind had driven between the armies, was somewhat dispersed, they perceived the Scots, who had moved down the hill, in a similar order of battle, and in deep silence.* The earls of Huntly and of Home commanded their left wing, and charged sir Edmund Howard with such success, as entirely to defeat his part of the English right wing. The admiral, however, stood firm; and Dacre, advancing to his support with the reserve of cavalry, probably between the intervals of the divisions commanded by the brothers Howard, appears to have kept the victors in effectual check. Home's men, chiefly borderers, began to pillage the baggage of both armies; and their leader is branded, by the Scottish historians, with negligence or treachery. On the other hand, Huntley, on whom they bestow many encomiums, is said, by the English historians, to have left the field after the first charge. Meanwhile the admiral, whose flank these chiefs ought to have attacked, availed himself of their inactivity and pushed forward against another large division of the Scottish army in his front, headed by the earls of Crawford and Montrose, both of whom were slain, and their forces routed. On the left, the success of the English was yet more decisive; for the Scottish right wing, consisting of undisciplined highlanders, commanded by Lenox and Argyle, was unable to sustain the charge of sir Edward Stanley, and especially the severe execution of the Lancashire archers. The king and Surrey, who commanded the respective centres of their armies, were meanwhile engaged in close and dubious conflict. James, surrounded by the flower of his kingdom, and impatient of the galling discharge of arrows, supported also by his reserve under Bothwell, charged with such fury, that the standard of Surrey was in danger. At that critical moment, Stanley, who had routed the left wing of the Scottish, pursued his career of victory, and arrived on the right flank, and in the rear of James's division, which, throwing itself into a circle, disputed the battle till night came on. Surrey then drew back his forces, for the Scottish centre not having been broken, and their left wing being victorious, he yet doubted the event of the field. The Scottish army, however, felt their loss, and abandoned the field of battle in disorder before dawn. They lost, perhaps, from eight to ten thousand men, but that included the very prime of their nobility, gentry, and even clergy. Scarce a family of eminence but has an ancestor killed at Flodden; and there is no province in Scotland, even at this day, where the battle is mentioned without a sensation of terror and sorrow. The English lost also a great number of men, perhaps within one-third of the vanquished, but they were of inferior note. —See the only distinct detail of the field of Flodden in *Pinkerton's History*, book xi, all former accounts being full of blunder and inconsistency.

The spot, from which Clara views the battle, must be supposed to have been on a hillock commanding the rear of the English right wing, which was defeated, and in which conflict Marmion is supposed to have fallen.

16. ——— Brian Tunstall, stainless knigbt.—P. 96.

Sir Brian Tunstall, called in the romantic language of the time, Tunstall the undefiled, was one of the few Englishmen of rank slain at Flodden. He figures in the ancient English poem, to which I may safely refer my reader; as an edition, with full explanatory notes, has been published by my friend Mr. Henry Weber. Tunstall perhaps derived his epithet of *undefiled* from his white armour and banner, the latter bearing a white cock about to crow, as well as from his unstained loyalty and knightly faith. His place of residence was Thurland castle.

17. View not that corpse mistrustfully,
Defaced and mangled though it be;
Nor to yon border castle high
Look northward with upbraiding eye.—P. 98.

There can be no doubt that king James fell in the battle of Flodden. He was killed, says the curious French gazette, within a lance's length of the earl of Surrey; and the same account adds, that none of his division were made prisoners, though many were killed: a circumstance that testifies the desperation of their resistance. The Scottish historians record many of the idle reports which passed among the vulgar of their day. Home was accused, by the popular voice, not only of failing to support the king, but even of having carried him out of the field and murdered him. And this tale was revived in my remembrance, by an unauthenticated story of a skeleton, wrapped in a bull's hide, and surrounded with an iron chain, said to have been found in the well of Home castle; for which, on inquiry, I could never find any better authority than the sexton of the parish having said, that *if the well were cleaned out, he would not be surprised at such a discovery.* Home was the chamberlain of the king, and his prime favourite; he had much to lose, (in fact did lose all,) in consequence of James's death, and nothing earthly to gain by that event: but the retreat, or inactivity of the left wing, which he commanded, after defeating sir Edmund Howard, and even the circumstance of his returning unhurt, and loaded with spoil, from so fatal a conflict, rendered the propagation of any calumny against him easy and acceptable: other reports gave a still more romantic turn to the king's fate, and averred, that James, weary of greatness after the carnage among his nobles, had gone on a pilgrimage to merit absolution for the death of his father, and the breach of his oath of amity to Henry. In particular, it was objected to the English, that they could never show the token of the iron belt; which, however, he was likely enough to have laid aside on the day of battle, as encumbering his personal exertions. They produce a better evidence, the monarch's sword and dagger, which are still preserved in the Herald's college in London. Stowe has recorded a degrading story of the disgrace with which the remains of the unfortunate monarch were treated in his time. An unhewn column marks the spot where James fell, still called the king's stone.

18. ——— fanatic Brook
The fair cathedral storm'd and took.—P. 98.

This storm of Litchfield cathedral, which had been garrisoned on the part of the king, took place in the great civil war. Lord Brooke, who, with sir John Gill, commanded the assailants, was shot with a musket-ball through the visor of his hel-

* "Lesquels Ecossois descendirent la montagne en bon ordre, en la maniere que marchent les Allemans, sans parler, ni faire aucun bruit." Gazette of the Battle, *Pinkerton's History, Appendix*, vol. ii, p. 456.

met. The royalists remarked, that he was killed by a shot fired from St. Chad's cathedral, and upon St. Chad's day, and received his death-wound in the very eye with which he had said, he hoped to see the ruin of all the cathedrals in England. The magnificent church in question suffered cruelly upon this, and other occasions; the principal spire being ruined by the fire of the besiegers.

Upon revising the poem, it seems proper to mention the following particulars:

The lines in page 68,

> Whose doom discording neighbours sought,
> Content with equity unbought;

have been unconsciously borrowed from a passage in Dryden's beautiful epistle to John Driden of Chesterton. The ballad of Lochinvar, p. 83, is in a very slight degree founded on a ballad called "Katherine Janfarie," which may be found in the "Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border."

The Lady of the Lake.

TO THE MOST NOBLE JOHN JAMES, MARQUIS OF ABERCORN, ETC.

THIS POEM IS INSCRIBED, BY THE AUTHOR.

ADVERTISEMENT.

The scene of the following poem is laid chiefly in the vicinity of Loch-Katrine, in the Western Highlands of Perthshire. The time of action includes six days, and the transactions of each day occupy a canto.

THE LADY OF THE LAKE.

CANTO I.

THE CHASE.

HARP of the North! that mouldering long hast hung
On the witch-elm that shades Saint Fillan's spring,
And down the fitful breeze thy numbers flung,
Till envious ivy did around thee cling,
Muffling with verdant ringlet every string,—
O minstrel harp, still must thine accents sleep?
Mid rustling leaves and fountains murmuring,
Still must thy sweeter sounds their silence keep,
Nor bid a warrior smile, nor teach a maid to weep?

Not thus, in ancient days of Caledon,
Was thy voice mute amid the festal crowd,
When lay of hopeless love, or glory won,
Aroused the fearful or subdued the proud.
At each according pause was heard aloud
Thine ardent symphony sublime and high!
Fair dames and crested chiefs attention bowed;
For still the burthen of thy minstrelsy
Was knighthood's dauntless deed and beauty's matchless eye.

O wake once more! how rude soe'er the hand
That ventures o'er thy magic maze to stray;
O wake once more! tho' scarce my skill command
Some feeble echoing of thine earlier lay:
Though harsh and faint, and soon to die away,
And all unworthy of thy nobler strain;
Yet, if one heart throb higher at its sway,
The wizard note has not been touched in vain.
Then silent be no more! Enchantress, wake again!

I.

THE Stag at eve had drunk his fill,
Where danced the moon on Monan's rill,
And deep his midnight lair had made
In lone Glenartney's hazel shade;
But when the sun his beacon red
Had kindled on Benvoirlich's head,
The deep-mouthed blood-hound's heavy bay
Resounded up the rocky way,
And faint, from farther distance borne,
Were heard the clanging hoof and horn.

II.

As chief, who hears his warder call,
"To arms! the foemen storm the wall,"—
The antlered monarch of the waste
Sprung from his heathery couch in haste.
But, e'er his fleet career he took,
The dew drops from his flanks he shook;
Like crested leader proud and high,
Tossed his beamed frontlet to the sky;
A moment gazed adown the dale,
A moment snuffed the tainted gale,
A moment listened to the cry,
That thickened as the chase drew nigh;
Then, as the headmost foes appeared,
With one brave bound the copse he cleared,
And, stretching forward free and far,
Sought the wild heaths of Uam-Var.

III.

Yelled on the view the opening pack,
Rock, glen, and cavern paid them back;
To many a mingled sound at once
The awakened mountain gave response.
An hundred dogs bayed deep and strong,
Clattered a hundred steeds along,
Their peal the merry horns rung out,
An hundred voices joined the shout:
With hark and whoop, and wild halloo,
No rest Benvoirlick's echoes knew.
Far from the tumult fled the roe,
Close in her covert cowered the doe,
The falcon, from her cairn on high,
Cast on the rout a wondering eye,
Till far beyond her piercing ken
The hurricane had swept the glen.
Faint, and more faint, its failing din
Returned from cavern, cliff, and linn,
And silence settled, wide and still,
On the lone wood and mighty hill.

IV.

Less loud the sounds of sylvan war
Disturbed the heights of Uam-Var,
And roused the cavern, where, 'tis told,
A giant made his den of old:[1]
For ere that steep ascent was won,
High in his pathway hung the sun,
And many a gallant, stayed per force,
Was fain to breathe his faltering horse;
And of the trackers of the deer
Scarce half the lessening pack was near;
So shrewdly, on the mountain side,
Had the bold burst their mettle tried.

V.

The noble stag was pausing now,
Upon the mountain's southern brow,
Where broad extended, far beneath,
The varied realms of fair Menteith.
With anxious eye he wandered o'er
Mountain and meadow, moss and moor,
And pondered refuge from his toil,
By far Lochard or Aberfoyle.
But nearer was the copse-wood gray,
That waved and wept on Loch-Achray,
And mingled with the pine-trees blue
On the bold cliffs of Ben-venue.
Fresh vigour with the hope returned,
With flying foot the heath he spurned,
Held westward with unwearied race,
And left behind the panting chase.

VI.

'Twere long to tell what steeds gave o'er,
As swept the hunt through Cambus-more;
What reins were tightened in despair,
When rose Benledi's ridge in air;
Who flagged upon Bochastle's heath,
Who shunned to stem the flooded Teith,
For twice, that day, from shore to shore,
The gallant stag swam stoutly o'er.
Few were the stragglers, following far,
That reached the lake of Vennachar;
And when the Brigg of Turk was won,
The headmost horseman rode alone.

VII.

Alone, but with unbated zeal,
That horseman plied the scourge and steel;
For jaded now, and spent with toil,
Embossed with foam, and dark with soil,
While every gasp with sobs he drew,
The labouring stag strained full in view.
Two dogs of black Saint Hubert's breed,
Unmatched for courage, breath, and speed,[2]
Fast on his flying traces came,
And all but won that desperate game;
For, scarce a spear's length from his haunch,
Vindictive toiled the blood-hounds staunch;
Nor nearer might the dogs attain,
Nor farther might the quarry strain.
Thus up the margin of the lake,
Between the precipice and brake,
O'er stock and rock their race they take.

VIII.

The hunter marked that mountain high,
The lone lake's western boundary,
And deemed the stag must turn to bay,
Where that huge rampart barred the way;
Already glorying in the prize,
Measured his antlers with his eyes;
For the death-wound, and death-halloo,
Muster'd his breath, his whinyard drew;—[3]
But thundering as he came prepared,
With ready arm and weapon bared,
The wily quarry shunned the shock,
And turned him from the opposing rock;
Then, dashing down a darksome glen,
Soon lost to hound and hunter's ken,
In the deep Trosach's wildest nook
His solitary refuge took.
There while, close couched, the thicket shed
Cold dews and wild flowers on his head,
He heard the baffled dogs in vain
Rave through the hollow pass amain,
Chiding the rocks that yelled again.

IX.

Close on the hounds the hunter came,
To cheer them on the vanished game;
But, stumbling in the rugged dell,
The gallant horse exhausted fell.
The impatient rider strove in vain
To rouse him with the spur and rein,
For the good steed, his labours o'er,
Stretched his stiff limbs to rise no more.
Then touched with pity and remorse,
He sorrowed o'er the expiring horse:
"I little thought, when first thy rein
I slacked upon the banks of Seine,
That highland eagle e'er should feed
On thy fleet limbs, my matchless steed;
Wo worth the chase, wo worth the day,
That costs thy life, my gallant gray!"—

X.

Then through the dell his horn resounds,
From vain pursuit to call the hounds.
Back limped, with slow and crippled pace,
The sulky leaders of the chase;
Close to their master's side they pressed,
With drooping tail and humbled crest;
But still the dingle's hollow throat
Prolonged the swelling bugle-note.
The owlets started from their dream,
The eagles answered with their scream,
Round and around the sounds were cast,
Till echo seemed an answering blast;
And on the hunter hied his way,
To join some comrades of the day;
Yet often paused, so strange the road,
So wond'rous were the scenes it showed.

XI.

The western waves of ebbing day
Rolled o'er the glen their level way;
Each purple peak, each flinty spire,
Was bathed in floods of living fire,
But not a setting beam could glow
Within the dark ravines below,
Where twined the path in shadow hid,
Round many a rocky pyramid,
Shooting abruptly from the dell
Its thunder-splintered pinnacle;
Round many an insulated mass,
The native bulwarks of the pass,
Huge as the tower which builders vain
Presumptuous piled on Shinar's plain.
The rocky summits, split and rent,
Formed turret, dome, or battlement,
Or seemed fantastically set
With cupola or minaret,
Wild crests as pagod ever decked,
Or mosque of eastern architect.
Nor were these earth-born castles bare,
Nor lacked they many a banner fair;

For, from their shiver'd brows display'd,
Far o'er the unfathomable glade,
All twinkling with the dew-drops sheen,
The briar-rose fell in streamers green,
And creeping shrubs, of thousand dyes,
Waved in the west-wind's summer sighs.

XII.

Boon nature scatter'd, free and wild,
Each plant, or flower, the mountain's child.
Here eglantine embalm'd the air,
Hawthorn and hazel mingled there;
The primrose pale, and violet flower,
Found in each cliff a narrow bower;
Fox-glove and night-shade, side by side,
Emblems of punishment and pride,
Group'd their dark hues with every stain
The weather-beaten crags retain.
With boughs that quaked at every breath,
Gray birch and aspen wept beneath;
Aloft, the ash and warrior oak
Cast anchor in the rifted rock;
And, higher yet, the pine-tree hung
His shatter'd trunk, and frequent flung,
Where seem'd the cliffs to meet on high,
His boughs athwart the narrow'd sky.
Highest of all, where white peaks glanced,
Where glist'ning streamers waved and danced,
The wanderer's eye could barely view
The summer heaven's delicious blue;
So wond'rous wild, the whole might seem
The scenery of a fairy dream.

XIII.

Onward, amid the copse 'gan peep
A narrow inlet, still and deep,
Affording scarce such breadth of brim,
As served the wild duck's brood to swim.
Lost for a space, through thickets veering,
But broader when again appearing,
Tall rocks and tufted knolls their face
Could on the dark-blue mirror trace;
And farther as the hunter strayed,
Still broader sweep its channels made.
The shaggy mounds no longer stood,
Emerging from entangled wood,
But, wave-encircled, seemed to float,
Like castle girdled with its moat;
Yet broader floods extending still,
Divide them from their parent hill,
Till each, retiring, claims to be
An islet in an inland sea.

XIV.

And now, to issue from the glen,
No pathway meets the wanderer's ken,
Unless he climb, with footing nice,
A scar projecting precipice.[4]
The broom's tough root his ladder made,
The hazel saplings lent their aid;
And thus an airy point he won,
Where, gleaming with the setting sun,
One burnished sheet of living gold,
Loch-Katrine lay beneath him rolled,
In all her length far winding lay,
With promontory, creek, and bay,
And islands that, empurpled bright,
Floated amid the livelier light,
And mountains, that like giants stand,
To sentinel enchanted land.
High on the south, huge Ben-venue
Down on the lake in masses threw
Crags, knolls, and mounds, confusedly hurled,
The fragments of an earlier world;
A wildering forest feathered o'er
His ruined sides and summit hoar,
While on the north, through middle air,
Ben-an heaved high his forehead bare.

XV.

From the steep promontory gazed
The stranger, raptured and amazed.
And "What a scene were here," he cried,
"For princely pomp, or churchman's pride!
On this bold brow, a lordly tower;
In that soft vale, a lady's bower:
On yonder meadow, far away,
The turrets of a cloister gray.
How blithly might the bugle horn
Chide, on the lake, the lingering morn!
How sweet, at eve, the lover's lute
Chime, when the groves were still and mute!
And, when the midnight moon should lave
Her forehead in the silver wave,
How solemn on the ear would come
The holy matin's distant hum,
While the deep peal's commanding tone
Should wake, in yonder islet lone,
A sainted hermit from his cell,
To drop a bead with every knell—
And bugle, lute, and bell, and all,
Should each bewildered stranger call
To friendly feast, and lighted hall.

XVI.

"Blith were it then to wander here!
But now,—beshrew yon nimble deer,—
Like that same hermit's, thin and spare,
The copse must give my evening fare;
Some mossy bank my couch must be,
Some rustling oak my canopy.
Yet pass we that;—the war and chase
Give little choice of resting place;—
A summer night, in green wood spent,
Were but to-morrow's merriment:—
But hosts may in these wilds abound,
Such as are better missed than found;
To meet with highland plunderers here
Were worse than loss of steed or deer.[5]
I am alone;—my bugle strain
May call some straggler of the train;
Or, fall the worst that may betide,
Ere now this falchion has been tried."

XVII.

But scarce again his horn he wound,
When lo! forth starting at the sound,
From underneath an aged oak,
That slanted from the islet rock,
A damsel guider of its way,
A little skiff shot to the bay,
That round the promontory steep
Led its deep line in graceful sweep,
Eddying, in almost viewless wave,
The weeping-willow twig to lave,
And kiss, with whispering sound and slow,
The beach of pebbles bright as snow.
The boat had touched this silver strand,
Just as the hunter left his stand,
And stood concealed amid the brake,
To view this lady of the lake.
The maiden paused, as if again
She thought to catch the distant strain.
With head up-raised, and look intent,
And eye and ear attentive bent,
And locks flung back, and lips apart,
Like monument of Grecian art,

In listening mood, she seemed to stand,
The guardian naiad of the strand.

XVIII.

And ne'er did Grecian chisel trace
A nymph, a naiad, or a grace,
Of finer form, or lovelier face!
What though the sun, with ardent frown,
Had slightly tinged her cheek with brown,
The sportive toil, which, short and light,
Had died her glowing hue so bright,
Served too in hastier swell to show
Short glimpses of a breast of snow;
What though no rule of courtly grace
To measured mood had trained her pace,—
A foot more light, a step more true,
Ne'er from the heath-flower dashed the dew;
E'en the slight hare-bell raised its head,
Elastic from her airy tread:
What though upon her speech there hung
The accents of the mountain tongue,—
Those silver sounds, so soft, so dear,
The list'ner held his breath to hear.

XIX.

A chieftain's daughter seemed the maid;
Her satin snood, her silken plaid,
Her golden brooch, such birth betrayed.
And seldom was a snood amid
Such wild luxuriant ringlets hid,
Whose glossy black to shame might bring
The plumage of the raven's wing;
And seldom o'er a breast so fair,
Mantled a plaid with modest care,
And never brooch the folds combined
Above a heart more good and kind.
Her kindness and her worth to spy,
You need but gaze on Ellen's eye;
Not Katrine, in her mirror blue,
Gives back the shaggy banks more true,
Than every free-born glance confessed
The guileless movements of her breast;
Whether joy danced in her dark eye,
Or wo or pity claimed a sigh,
Or filial love was glowing there,
Or meek devotion poured a prayer,
Or tale of injury called forth
The indignant spirit of the north.
One only passion, unrevealed,
With maiden pride the maid concealed,
Yet not less purely felt the flame—
O need I tell that passion's name!

XX.

Impatient of the silent horn,
Now on the gale her voice was borne:
"Father!" she cried; the rocks around
Loved to prolong the gentle sound.—
A while she paused, no answer came,—
"Malcolm, was thine the blast?" the name
Less resolutely uttered fell,
The echoes could not catch the swell.
"A stranger I," the huntsman said,
Advancing from the hazel shade.
The maid, alarmed, with hasty oar,
Pushed her light shallop from the shore,
And, when a space was gained between,
Closer she drew her bosom screen;
(So forth the startled swan would swing,
So turn to prune his ruffled wing;)
Then safe, though fluttered and amazed,
She paused, and on the stranger gazed,
Not his the form, nor his the eye,
That youthful maidens wont to fly.

XXI.

On his bold visage middle age
Had slightly pressed its signet sage,
Yet had not quenched the open truth,
And fiery vehemence of youth;
Forward and frolic glee was there,
The will to do, the soul to dare,
The sparkling glance, soon blown to fire,
Of hasty love, or headlong ire.
His limbs were cast in manly mould,
For hardy sports, or contest bold;
And though in peaceful garb arrayed,
And weaponless except his blade,
His stately mien as well implied
A high born heart, a martial pride,
As if a baron's crest he wore,
And sheathed in armour trod the shore.
Slighting the petty need he showed,
He told of his benighted road;
His ready speech flowed fair and free,
In phrase of gentlest courtesy:
Yet seemed that tone, and gesture bland,
Less used to sue than to command.

XXII.

Awhile the maid the stranger eyed,
And, re-assured, at length replied,
That highland halls were open still
To wildered wanderers of the hill.
"Nor think you unexpected come
To yon lone isle, our desert home;
Before the heath had lost the dew,
This morn, a couch was pulled for you;
On yonder mountain's purple head
Have ptarmigan and heath-cock bled,
And our broad nets have swept the mere,
To furnish forth your evening cheer."
"Now, by the rood, my lovely maid,
Your courtesy has erred," he said;
"No right have I to claim, misplaced,
The welcome of expected guest.
A wanderer, here by fortune tost,
My way, my friends, my courser lost,
I ne'er before, believe me, fair,
Have ever drawn your mountain air,
Till on this lake's romantic strand,
I found a fay in fairy land."

XXIII.

"I well believe," the maid replied,
As her light skiff approached the side,
"I well believe, that ne'er before
Your foot has trod Loch-Katrine's shore;
But yet, as far as yesternight,
Old Allan-bane foretold your plight,—
A gray-haired sire, whose eye intent
Was on the visioned future bent.[6]
He saw your steed, a dappled gray,
Lie dead beneath the birchen way;
Painted exact your form and mien,
Your hunting suit of Lincoln green,
That tasseled horn so gayly gilt,
That falchion's crooked blade and hilt,
That cap with heron's plumage trim,
And yon two hounds so dark and grim.
He bade that all should ready be,
To grace a guest of fair degree;
But light I held his prophecy,
And deemed it was my father's horn,
Whose echoes o'er the lake were borne."

XXIV.

The stranger smiled:—"Since to your home
A destined errant-knight I come,

Announced by prophet sooth and old,
Doomed doubtless, for achievement bold,
I'll lightly front each high emprize,
For one kind glance of those bright eyes.
Permit me, first, the task to guide
Your fairy frigate o'er the tide."
The maid, with smile suppressed and sly,
The toil unwonted saw him try;
For seldom, sure, if e'er before,
His noble hand had grasped an oar:
Yet with main strength his strokes he drew,
And o'er the lake the shallop flew:
With heads ereet, and whimpering cry,
The hounds behind their passage ply.
Nor frequent does the bright oar break
The darkening mirror of the lake,
Until the rocky isle they reach,
And moor their shallop on the beach.

XXV.

The stranger viewed the shore around;
'Twas all so close with copse-wood bound,
Nor track nor pathway might declare
That human foot frequented there,
Until the mountain maiden showed
A clambering unsuspected road,
That winded through the tangled screen,
And opened on a narrow green,
Where weeping birch and willow round
With their long fibres swept the ground.
Here, for retreat in dangerous hour,
Some chief had framed a rustic bower.[7]

XXVI.

It was a lodge of ample size,
But strange of structure and device;
Of such materials, as around
The workman's hand had readiest found.
Lopped of their boughs, their hoar trunks bared,
And by the hatchet rudely squared,
To give the walls their destined height,
The sturdy oak and ash unite;
While moss and clay and leaves combined
To fence each crevice from the wind.
The lighter pine-trees, over head,
Their slender length for rafters spread,
And withered heath and rushes dry
Supplied a russet canopy.
Due westward, fronting to the green,
A rural portico was seen,
Aloft on native pillars borne,
Of mountain fir with bark unshorn,
Where Ellen's hand had taught to twine
The ivy and Idæan vine,
The clematis, the favoured flower
Which boasts the name of virgin-bower,
And every hardy plant could bear
Loch-Katrine's keen and searching air.
An instant in this porch she staid,
And gayly to the stranger said,
"On heaven and on thy lady call,
And enter the enchanted hall!"

XXVII.

"My hope, my heaven, my trust must be,
My gentle guide, in following thee."—
He crossed the threshold—and a clang
Of angry steel that instant rang.
To his bold brow his spirit rushed,
But soon for vain alarm he blushed,
When on the floor he saw displayed,
Cause of the din, a naked blade
Dropped from the sheath, that careless flung,
Upon a stag's huge antlers swung;
For all around, the walls to grace,
Hung trophies of the fight or chase:
A target there, a bugle here,
A battle-axe, a hunting spear,
And broad-swords, bows, and arrows, store,
With the tusked trophies of the boar.
Here grins the wolf as when he died,
And there the wild-cat's brindled hide
The frontlet of the elk adorns,
Or mantles o'er the hison's horns:
Pennons and flags defaced and stained,
That blackening streaks of blood retained,
And deer-skins, dappled, dun and white,
With otter's fur and seal's unite,
In rude and uncouth tapestry all,
To garnish forth the sylvan hall.

XXVIII.

The wondering stranger round him gazed,
And next the fallen weapon raised;
Few were the arms whose sinewy strength
Sufficed to stretch it forth at length.
And as the brand he poised and swayed,
"I never knew but one," he said,
"Whose stalwart arm might brook to wield
A blade like this in battle field."
She sighed, then smiled, and took the word;
"You see the guardian champion's sword;
As light it trembles in his hand,
As in my grasp a hazel wand;
My sire's tall form might grace the part
Of Ferragus, or Ascapart:[8]
But in the absent giant's hold
Are women now, and menials old."

XXIX.

The mistress of the mansion came,
Mature of age, a graceful dame;
Whose easy step and stately port
Had well become a princely court,
To whom, though more than kindred knew,
Young Ellen gave a mother's due.
Meet welcome to her guest she made,
And every courteous rite was paid,
That hospitality could claim,
Though all unasked his birth and name.[9]
Such then the reverence to a guest,
That fellest foe might join the feast,
And from his deadliest foeman's door
Unquestioned turn, the banquet o'er.
At length his rank the stranger names,
"The knight of Snowdoun, James Fitz-James;
Lord of a barren heritage,
Which his brave sires, from age to age,
By their good swords had held with toil;
His sire had fallen in such turmoil,
And he, God wot, was forced to stand
Oft for his right with blade in hand.
This morning with lord Moray's train
He chased a stalwart stag in vain,
Outstripped his comrades, missed the deer,
Lost his good steed, and wandered here."

XXX.

Fain would the knight in turn require
The name and state of Ellen's sire;
Well showed the elder lady's mien,
That courts and cities she had seen;
Ellen, though more her looks displayed
The simple grace of sylvan maid,
In speech and gesture, form and face,
Showed she was come of gentle race;
'Twere strange in ruder rank to find
Such looks, such manners, and such mind.

Each hint the knight of Snowdoun gave,
Dame Margaret heard with silence grave;
Or Ellen, innocently gay,
Turned all inquiry light away:
"Wierd women we! by dale and down
We dwell, afar from tower and town.
We stem the flood, we ride the blast,
On wandering knights our spells we cast;
While viewless minstrels touch the string,
'Tis thus our charmed rhymes we sing."
She sung, and still a harp unseen
Filled up the symphony between.[10]

XXXI.

SONG.

"Soldier, rest! thy warfare o'er,
Sleep the sleep that knows not breaking;
Dream of battled fields no more,
Days of danger, nights of waking.
In our isle's enchanted hall,
Hands unseen thy couch are strewing,
Fairy strains of music fall,
Every sense in slumber dewing.
Soldier, rest! thy warfare o'er,
Dream of fighting fields no more;
Sleep the sleep that knows not breaking,
Morn of toil, nor night of waking.

"No rude sound shall reach thine ear,
Armour's clang, or war-steed champing,
Trump nor pibroch summon here
Mustering clan, or squadron tramping.
Yet the lark's shrill fife may come,
At the day-break from the fallow,
And the bittern sound his drum,
Booming from the sedgy shallow.
Ruder sounds shall none be near,
Guards nor warders challenge here,
Here's no war-steed's neigh and champing,
Shouting clans or squadrons stamping."

XXXII.

She paused—then, blushing, led the lay
To grace the stranger of the day.
Her mellow notes awhile prolong
The cadence of the flowing song,
Till to her lips in measured frame
The minstrel verse spontaneous came.

SONG CONTINUED.

"Huntsman, rest! thy chase is done,
While our slumbrous spells assail ye,
Dream not, with the rising sun,
Bugles here shall sound reveillie,
Sleep! the deer is in his den;
Sleep! the hounds are by thee lying;
Sleep nor dream in yonder glen,
How thy gallant steed lay dying.
Huntsman, rest! thy chase is done,
Think not of the rising sun,
For at dawning, to assail ye,
Here no bugles sound reveillie."

XXXIII.

The hall was cleared—the stranger's bed
Was there of mountain heather spread,
Where oft an hundred guests had lain,
And dreamed their forest sports again.
But vainly did the heath-flower shed
Its moorland fragrance round his head;
Not Ellen's spell had lulled to rest
The fever of his troubled breast.
In broken dreams the image rose
Of varied perils, pains, and woes;
His steed now flounders in the brake,
Now sinks his barge upon the lake:
Now leader of a broken host,
His standard falls, his honour's lost.
Then, from my couch may heavenly might
Chase that worst phantom of the night!—
Again returned the scenes of youth,
Of confident undoubting truth;
Again his soul he interchanged
With friends whose hearts were long estranged.
They come, in dim procession led,
The cold, the faithless, and the dead;
As warm each hand, each brow as gay,
As if they parted yesterday.
And doubts distract him at the view,
O were his senses false or true?
Dreamed he of death, or broken vow,
Or is it all a vision now?

XXXIV.

At length, with Ellen in a grove
He seemed to walk, and speak of love;
She listened with a blush and sigh,
His suit was warm, his hopes were high.
He sought her yielded hand to clasp,
And a cold gauntlet met his grasp;
The phantom's sex was changed and gone,
Upon its head a helmet shone;
Slowly enlarged to giant size,
With darkened cheek and threatening eyes,
The grisly visage, stern and hoar,
To Ellen still a likeness bore.—
He woke, and, panting with affright,
Recalled the vision of the night.
The hearth's decaying brands were red,
And deep and dusky lustre shed,
Half showing, half concealing all
The uncouth trophies of the hall.
'Mid those the stranger fixed his eye
Where that huge falchion hung on high,
And thoughts on thoughts, a countless throng,
Rushed, chasing countless thoughts along,
Until, the giddy whirl to cure,
He rose, and sought the moonshine pure.

XXXV.

The wild rose, eglantine, and broom,
Wasted around their rich perfume;
The birch trees wept in fragrant balm,
The aspen slept beneath the calm;
The silver light, with quivering glance,
Played on the water's still expanse,—
Wild were the heart whose passion's sway
Could rage beneath the sober ray!
He felt its calm, that warrior guest,
While thus he communed with his breast:—
"Why is it, at each turn I trace
Some memory of that exiled race?
Can I not mountain maiden spy,
But she must bear the Douglas eye?
Can I not view a highland brand,
But it must match the Douglas hand?
Can I not frame a fevered dream,
But still the Douglas is the theme?
I'll dream no more—by manly mind
Not e'en in sleep is will resigned.
My midnight orisons said o'er,
I'll turn to rest, and dream no more."
His midnight orison he told,
A prayer with every bead of gold,
Consigned to heaven his cares and woes,
And sunk in undisturbed repose;
Until the heath cock shrilly crew,
And morning dawned on Ben-venue.

CANTO II.

THE ISLAND.

I.

At morn the black-cock trims his jetty wing,
'Tis morning prompts the linnet's blithest lay;
All nature's children feel the matin spring
Of life reviving, with reviving day;
And while yon little bark glides down the bay,
Wafting the stranger on his way again,
Morn's genial influence roused a minstrel gray,[1]
And sweetly o'er the lake was heard thy strain,
Mixed with the sounding harp, O white haired Allan-bane!

II.

SONG.

'Not faster yonder rowers' might
Flings from their oars the spray,
Not faster yonder rippling bright,
That tracks the shallop's course in light,
Melts in the lake away,
Than men from memory erase
The benefits of former days;
Then, stranger, go! good speed the while,
Nor think again of the lonely isle.

"High place to thee in royal court,
High place in battle line,
Good hawk and hound for sylvan sport,
Where beauty sees the brave resort,
The honoured meed be thine!
True be thy sword, thy friend sincere,
Thy lady constant, kind, and dear,
And lost in love's and friendship's smile,
Be memory of the lonely isle.

III.

SONG CONTINUED.

"But if beneath yon southern sky
A plaided stranger roam,
Whose drooping crest and stifled sigh,
And sunken cheek and heavy eye,
Pine for his highland home;
Then, warrior, then be thine to show
The care that sooths a wanderer's wo;
Remember then thy hap ere while,
A stranger in the lonely isle.

"Or, if on life's uncertain main
Mishap shall mar thy sail,
If faithful, wise, and brave in vain,
Wo, want, and exile thou sustain
Beneath the fickle gale;
Waste not a sigh on fortune changed,
On thankless courts, or friends estranged,
But come where kindred worth shall smile,
To greet thee in the lonely isle."

IV.

As died the sounds upon the tide,
The shallop reached the mainland side,
And ere his onward way he took,
The stranger cast a lingering look,
Where easily his eye might reach
The harper on the islet beach,
Reclined against a blighted tree,
As wasted, gray, and worn as he.
To minstrel meditation given,
His reverend brow was raised to heaven,
As from the rising sun to claim
A sparkle of inspiring flame.
His hand, reclined upon the wire,
Seemed watching the awakening fire;
So still he sate, as those who wait
Till judgment speak the doom of fate;
So still, as if no breeze might dare
To lift one lock of hoary hair;
So still, as life itself were fled,
In the last sound his harp had sped.

V.

Upon a rock with lichens wild,
Beside him Ellen sate and smiled.
Smiled she to see the stately drake
Lead forth his fleet upon the lake,
While her vexed spaniel, from the beach,
Bayed at the prize beyond his reach!
Yet tell me, then, the maid who knows,
Why deepened on her cheek the rose?—
Forgive, forgive, fidelity!
Perchance the maiden smiled to see
Yon parting lingerer wave adieu,
And stop and turn to wave anew;
And, lovely ladies, ere your ire
Condemn the heroine of my lyre,
Show me the fair would scorn to spy,
And prize such conquest of her eye!

VI.

While yet he loitered on the spot,
It seemed as Ellen marked him not;
But when he turned him to the glade,
One courteous parting sign she made:
And after, oft the knight would say,
That not when prize of festal day
Was dealt him by the brightest fair,
Who e'er wore jewel in her hair,
So highly did his bosom swell,
As at that simple, mute farewell.
Now with a trusty mountain guide,
And his dark stag-hounds by his side,
He parts—the maid, unconscious still,
Watched him wind slowly round the hill:
But when his stately form was hid,
The guardian in her bosom chid—
"Thy Malcolm! vain and selfish maid!"
'Twas thus upbraiding conscience said,
"Not so had Malcolm idly hung
On the smooth phrase of southern tongue;
Not so had Malcolm strained his eye
Another step than thine to spy.—
Wake, Allan-bane," aloud she cried,
To the old minstrel by her side,
"Arouse thee from thy moody dream!
I'll give thy harp heroic theme,
And warm thee with a noble name;
Pour forth the glory of the Græme."[2]
Scarce from her lip the word had rushed,
When deep the conscious maiden blushed;
For of his clan, in hall and bower,
Young Malcolm Græme was held the flower.

VII.

The minstrel waked his harp—three times
Arose the well-known martial chimes,
And thrice their high heroic pride
In melancholy murmurs died.
——"Vainly thou bid'st, O noble maid,"
Clasping his withered hands, he said,
"Vainly thou bid'st me wake the strain,
Though all unwont to bid in vain.
Alas! than mine a mightier hand
Has tuned my harp, my strings has spanned!
I touch the chords of joy, but low
And mournful answer notes of wo;
And the proud march, which victors tread,
Sinks in the wailing for the dead.

O well for me, if mine alone
That dirge's deep prophetic tone!
If, as my tuneful fathers said,
This harp, which erst saint Modan swayed,[3]
Can thus its master's fate foretell,
Then welcome be the minstrel's knell!

VIII.

"But ah! dear lady, thus it sighed
The eve thy sainted mother died;
And such the sounds which, while I strove
To wake a lay of war or love,
Came marring all the festal mirth,
Appalling me who gave them birth,
And, disobedient to my call,
Wailed loud through Bothwell's bannered hall,
Ere Douglasses, to ruin driven,
Were exiled from their native heaven.—[4]
Oh! if yet worse mishap and wo
My master's house must undergo,
Or aught but weal to Ellen fair,
Brood in these accents of despair,
No future bard, sad harp! shall fling
Triumph or rapture from thy string;
One short, one final strain shall flow,
Fraught with unutterable wo,
Then shivered shall thy fragments lie,
Thy master cast him down and die."

IX.

Soothing she answered him, "Assuage,
Mine honoured friend, the fears of age;
All melodies to thee are known,
That harp has rung, or pipe has blown,
In lowland vale or highland glen,
From Tweed to Spey—what marvel, then,
At times, unbidden notes should rise,
Confusedly bound in memory's ties,
Entangling, as they rush along,
The war-march with the funeral song?—
Small ground is now for boding fear;
Obscure, but safe, we rest us here.
My sire, in native virtue great,
Resigning lordship, lands, and state,
Not then to fortune more resigned,
Than yonder oak might give the wind;
The graceful foliage storms may reave,
The noble stem they cannot grieve.
For me"—she stooped, and, looking round,
Plucked a blue hare-bell from the ground,
"For me, whose memory scarce conveys
An image of more splendid days,
This little flower, that loves the lea,
May well my simple emblem be:
It drinks heaven's dew as blith as rose
That in the king's own garden grows;
And when I place it in my hair,
Allan, a bard is bound to swear
He ne'er saw coronet so fair."
Then playfully the chaplet wild
She wreathed in her dark locks, and smiled.

X.

Her smile, her speech, with winning sway,
Wiled the old harper's mood away.
With such a look as hermits throw
When angels stoop to sooth their wo,
He gazed, till fond regret and pride
Thrilled to a tear, then thus replied:
"Loveliest and best! thou little know'st
The rank, the honours thou hast lost!
O might I live to see thee grace,
In Scotland's court, thy birth-right place,
To see my favourite's step advance,
The lightest in the courtly dance,
The cause of every gallant's sigh,
And leading star of every eye,
And theme of every minstrel's art,
The lady of the bleeding heart!"*

XI.

"Fair dreams are these," the maiden cried,
(Light was her accent, yet she sighed,)
"This mossy rock, my friend, to me
Is worth gay chair and canopy;
Nor would my footstep spring more gay
In courtly dance than blith strathspey.
Nor half so pleased mine ear incline
To royal minstrel's lay as thine;
And then for suitors proud and high,
To bend before my conquering eye,
Thou, flattering bard, thyself wilt say,
That grim sir Roderick owns its sway.
The Saxon scourge, Clan-Alpine's pride,
The terror of Loch-Lomond's side,
Would, at my suit, thou know'st delay
A Lennox foray—for a day."

XII.

The ancient bard his glee repressed:
"Ill hast thou chosen theme for jest!
For who, through all this western wild,
Named black sir Roderick e'er, and smiled?
In Holy-Rood a knight he slew;[5]
I saw, when back the dirk he drew,
Courtiers gave place before the stride
Of the undaunted homicide:
And since, though outlawed, hath his hand
Full sternly kept his mountain land.
Who else dared give?—ah! wo the day,
That I such hated truth should say—
The Douglas, like a stricken deer,
Disowned by every noble peer,[6]
E'en the rude refuge we have here!
Alas, this wild marauding chief
Alone might hazard our relief,
And, now thy maiden charms expand,
Looks for his guerdon in thy hand;
Full soon may dispensation sought,
To back his suit, from Rome be brought.
Then, though an exile on the hill,
Thy father, as the Douglas, still
Be held in reverence and fear;
But though to Roderick thou'rt so dear,
That thou might'st guide with silken thread,
Slave of thy will, this chieftain dread,
Yet, O loved maid, thy mirth refrain!
Thy hand is on a lion's mane."

XIII.

"Minstrel," the maid replied, and high
Her father's soul glanced from her eye,
"My debts to Roderick's house I know:
All that a mother could bestow,
To lady Margaret's care I owe,
Since first an orphan in the wild
She sorrowed o'er her sister's child:
To her brave chieftain son, from ire
Of Scotland's king who shrouds my sire,
A deeper, holier debt is owed;
And, could I pay it with my blood,
Allan! sir Roderick should command
My blood, my life—but not my hand.
Rather will Ellen Douglas dwell
A votaress in Maronnan's cell;[7]

* The well-known cognizance of the Douglas family.

Rather through realms beyond the sea,
Seeking the world's cold charity,
Where ne'er was spoke a Scottish word,
And ne'er the name of Douglas heard,
An outcast pilgrim will she rove,
Than wed the man she cannot love.

XIV.

"Thou shakest, good friend, thy tresses gray—
That pleading look, what can it say
But what I own?—I grant him brave,
But wild as Bracklinn's thundering wave;[8]
And generous—save vindictive mood,
Or jealous transport, chafe his blood:
I grant him true to friendly band,
As his claymore is to his hand;
But O! that very blade of steel
More mercy for a foe would feel:
I grant him liberal, to fling
Among his clan the wealth they bring,
When back by lake and glen they wind,
And in the lowland leave behind,
Where once some pleasant hamlet stood,
A mass of ashes slaked with blood.
The hand that for my father fought,
I honour, as his daughter ought;
But can I clasp it reeking red,
From peasants slaughtered in their shed?
No! wildly while his virtues gleam,
They make his passions darker seem,
And flash along his spirit high,
Like lightning o'er the midnight sky.
While yet a child,—and children know,
Instinctive taught, the friend and foe,—
I shuddered at his brow of gloom,
His shadowy plaid, and sable plume;
A maiden grown, I ill could bear
His haughty mien and lordly air;
But, if thou join'st a suitor's claim,
In serious mood, to Roderick's name,
I thrill with anguish! or, if e'er
A Douglas knew the word, with fear.
To change such odious theme were best,—
What think'st thou of our stranger guest?"

XV.

"What think I of him? wo the while
That brought such wanderer to our isle!
Thy father's battle brand, of yore
For Tyne-man forged by fairy lore,[9]
What time he leagued, no longer foes,
His border spears with Hotspur's bows,
Did, self-unscabbarded, fore-show
The footsteps of a secret foe.[10]
If courtly spy had harboured here,
What may we for the Douglas fear?
What for this island, deemed of old
Clan-Alpine's last and surest hold?
If neither spy nor foe, I pray,
What yet may jealous Roderick say!
Nay, wave not thy disdainful head!
Bethink thee of the discord dread
That kindled when at Beltane game
Thou led'st the dance with Malcolm Græme;
Still, though thy sire the peace renewed,
Smoulders in Roderick's breast the feud;
Beware!—But hark, what sounds are these?
My dull ears catch no faltering breeze,
No weeping birch, nor aspen's wake,
Nor breath is dimpling in the lake,
Still is the canna's* hoary beard,—
Yet, by my minstrel faith, I heard—
And hark again! some pipe of war
Sends the bold pibroch from afar."

XVI.

Far up the lengthened lake were spied
Four darkening specks upon the tide,
That, slow enlarging on the view,
Four manned and masted barges grew,
And, bearing downwards from Glengyle,
Steered full upon the lonely isle;
The point of Brianchoil they passed,
And to the windward as they cast,
Against the sun they gave to shine
The bold sir Roderick's bannered pine.
Nearer and nearer as they bear,
Spears, pikes, and axes flash in air.
Now might you see the tartans brave,
And plaids and plumage dance and wave;
Now see the bonnets sink and rise,
As his tough oar the rower plies;
See, flashing at each sturdy stroke,
The wave ascending into smoke;
See the proud pipers on the bow,
And mark the gaudy streamers flow
From their loud chanters* down, and sweep
The furrowed bosom of the deep,
As, rushing through the lake amain,
They plied the ancient highland strain.

XVII.

Ever, as on they bore, more loud
And louder rung the pibroch proud.[11]
At first the sound, by distance tame,
Mellowed along the waters came,
And, lingering long by cape and bay,
Wailed every harsher note away;
Then bursting bolder on the ear,
The clan's shrill gathering they could hear;
Those thrilling sounds, that call the might
Of old Clan-Alpine to the fight.
Thick beat the rapid notes, as when
The mustering hundreds shake the glen,
And hurrying at the signal-dread,
The battered earth returns their tread.
Then prelude light, of livelier tone,
Expressed their merry marching on,
Ere peal of closing battle rose,
With mingled outcry, shrieks, and blows:
And mimic din of stroke and ward,
As broadsword upon target jarred;
And groaning pause, e'er yet again,
Condensed, the battle yelled amain;
The rapid charge, the rallying shout,
Retreat borne headlong into rout,
And bursts of triumph, to declare,
Clan-Alpine's conquest—all were there.
Nor ended thus the strain; but slow
Sunk in a moan prolonged and low,
And changed the conquering clarion swell,
For wild lament o'er those that fell.

XVIII.

The war-pipes ceased; but lake and hill
Were busy with their echoes still;
And, when they slept, a vocal strain
Bade their hoarse chorus wake again,
While loud a hundred clans-men raise
Their voices in their chieftain's praise.
Each boatman, bending to his oar,
With measured sweep the burthen bore,
In such wild cadence, as the breeze
Makes through December's leafless trees.

* Cotton grass.

* The drone of the bag-pipe.

The chorus first could Allen know,
"Roderigh Vich Alpine, ho! ierо!"
And near, and nearer, as they rowed,
Distinct the martial ditty flowed.

XIX.

BOAT SONG.

Hail to the chief who in triumph advances!
Honoured and blessed be the ever-green pine!
Long may the tree in his banner that glances
Flourish, the shelter and grace of our line!
Heaven send it happy dew,
Earth lend it sap anew,
Gayly to bourgeon, and broadly to grow;
While every highland glen
Sends our shout back agen,
"Roderigh Vich Alpine dhu, ho! ieroe!"[12]

Ours is no sapling, chance-sown by the fountain,
Blooming at Beltane, in winter to fade;
When the whirlwind has stripped every leaf on the mountain,
The more shall Clan-Alpine exult in her shade.
Moored in the rifted rock,
Proof to the tempest's shock,
Firmer he roots him the ruder it blow;
Menteith and Breadalbane, then,
Echo his praise agen,
"Roderigh Vich Alpine dhu, ho! ieroe!"

XX.

Proudly our pibroch has thrilled in Glen Fruin,
And Bannochar's groans to our slogan replied,
Glen Luss and Ross-dhu, they are smoking in ruin,
And the best of Loch-Lomond lie dead on her side.[13]
Widow and Saxon maid
Long shall lament our aid,
Think of Clan-Alpine with fear and with wo;
Lennox and Leven-glen
Shake when they hear agen,
"Roderigh Vich Alpine dhu, ho! ieroe!"

Row, vassals, row, for the pride of the highlands!
Stretch to your oars for the ever-green pine!
O! that the rose-bud that graces yon islands
Were wreathed in a garland around him to twine!
O that some seedling gem,
Worthy such noble stem,
Honoured and blessed in their shadow might grow!
Loud should Clan-Alpine then
Ring from her deepmost glen,
"Roderigh Vich Alpine dhu, ho! ieroe!"

XXI.

With all her joyful female band,
Had lady Margaret sought the strand.
Loose on the breeze their tresses flew,
And high their snowy arms they threw;
As echoing back with shrill acclaim,
And chorus wild, the chieftain's name;
While, prompt to please, with mother's art,
The darling passion of his heart,
The dame called Ellen to the strand,
To greet her kinsman ere he land:
"Come, loiterer, come! a Douglas thou,
And shun to wreath a victor's brow!"—
Reluctantly, and slow, the maid
The unwelcome summoning obeyed,
And, when a distant bugle rung,
In the mid-path aside she sprung:—
"List, Allan-bane! from main land east,
I hear my father's signal blast.
Be ours," she cried, "the skiff to guide,
And waft him from the mountain side."
Then, like a sunbeam, swift and bright,
She darted to her shallop light,
And, eagerly while Roderick scanned,
For her dear form, his mother's band,
The islet far behind her lay,
And she had landed in the bay.

XXII.

Some feelings are to mortals given,
With less of earth in them than heaven
And if there be a human tear
From passion's dross refined and clear,
A tear so limpid and so meek,
It would not stain an angel's cheek,
'Tis that which pious fathers shed
Upon a duteous daughter's head!
And as the Douglas to his breast
His darling Ellen closely pressed,
Such holy drops her tresses steeped,
Though 'twas a hero's eye that weeped.
Nor while on Ellen's faltering tongue
Her filial welcomes crowded hung,
Marked she, that fear (affection's proof)
Still held a graceful youth aloof;
No! not till Douglas named his name,
Although the youth was Malcolm Græme.

XXIII.

Allan, with wistful look the while,
Marked Roderick landing on the isle;
His master piteously he eyed,
Then gazed upon the chieftain's pride,
Then dashed, with hasty hand, away
From his dimmed eye the gathering spray;
And Douglas, as his hand he laid
On Malcolm's shoulder, kindly said,
"Canst thou, young friend, no meaning spy
In my poor follower's glistening eye?
I'll tell thee:—he recals the day,
When in my praise he led the lay
O'er the arched gate of Bothwell proud,
While many a minstrel answered loud,
When Percy's Norman pennon, won
In bloody field, before me shone,
And twice ten knights, the least a name
As mighty as yon chief may claim,
Gracing my pomp, behind me came.
Yet trust me, Malcolm, not so proud
Was I of all that marshalled crowd,
Though the waned crescent owned my might,—
And in my train trooped lord and knight,
Though Blantyre hymned her holiest lays,
And Bothwell's bards flung back my praise,
As when this old man's silent tear,
And this poor maid's affection dear,
A welcome give more kind and true,
Than aught my better fortunes knew.
Forgive, my friend, a father's boast;
O! it out-beggars all I lost!"

XXIV.

Delightful praise!—like summer rose,
That brighter in the dew drop glows,
The bashful maiden's cheek appeared,
For Douglas spoke, and Malcolm heard.
The flush of shame-faced joy to hide,
The hounds, the hawk, her cares divide:
The loved caresses of the maid
The dogs with crouch and whimper paid;
And, at her whistle, on her hand
The falcon took his favourite stand,

Closed his dark wing, relaxed his eye,
Nor, though unhooded, sought to fly,
And, trust, while in such guise she stood,
Like fabled goddess of the wood,
That if a father's partial thought
O'er weighed her worth and beauty aught,
Well might the lover's judgment fail
To balance with a juster scale;
For with each secret glance he stole,
The fond enthusiast sent his soul.

XXV.

Of stature tall, and slender frame,
But firmly knit, was Malcolm Græme.
The belted plaid and tartan hose
Did ne'er more graceful limbs disclose;
His flaxen hair, of sunny hue,
Curled closely round his bonnet blue.
Trained to the chase, his eagle eye
The ptarmigan in snow could spy:
Each pass, by mountain, lake, and heath,
He knew, through Lennox and Menteith;
Vain was the bound of dark brown doe,
When Malcolm bent his sounding bow,
And scarce that doe, though winged with fear,
Out-stripped in speed the mountaineer:
Right up Ben-Lomond could he press,
And not a sob his toil confess,
His form accorded with a mind
Lively and ardent, frank and kind;
A blither heart, till Ellen came,
Did never love nor sorrow tame;
It danced as lightsome in his breast,
As played the feather on his crest.
Yet friends who nearest knew the youth,
His scorn of wrong, his zeal for truth,
And bards, who saw his features bold,
When kindled by the tales of old,
Said, were that youth to manhood grown,
Not long should Roderick Dhu's renown
Be foremost voiced by mountain fame,
But quail to that of Malcolm Græme.

XXVI.

Now back they wend their watery way,
And, "O my sire!" did Ellen say,
"Why urge thy chase so far astray?
And why so late returned? And why"—
The rest was in her speaking eye.
"My child, the chase I follow far,
'Tis mimicry of noble war;
And with that gallant pastime reft
Were all of Douglas I have left.
I met young Malcolm as I strayed
Far eastward, in Glenfinlas' shade
Nor strayed I safe: for, all around,
Hunters and horsemen scoured the ground.
This youth, though still a royal ward,
Risked life and land to be my guard,
And through the passes of the wood
Guided my steps, not unpursued;
And Roderick shall his welcome make,
Despite old spleen, for Douglas' sake.
Then must he seek Strath-Endrick glen,
Nor peril aught for me agen."—

XXVII.

Sir Roderick, who to meet them came,
Reddened at sight of Malcolm Græme.
Yet, not in action, word, or eye,
Failed aught in hospitality.
In talk and sport they whiled away
The morning of that summer day;
But at high noon a courier light
Held secret parley with the knight;
Whose moody aspect soon declared,
That evil were the news he heard.
Deep thought seemed toiling in his head;
Yet was the evening banquet made,
E'er he assembled round the flame,
His mother, Douglas, and the Græme,
And Ellen, too; then cast around
His eyes, then fixed them on the ground,
As studying phrase that might avail
Best to convey unpleasant tale.
Long with his dagger's hilt he played,
Then raised his haughty brow, and said:

XXVIII.

"Short be my speech;—nor time affords,
Nor my plain temper, glozing words.
Kinsman and father,—if such name
Douglas vouchsafe to Roderick's claim;
Mine honoured mother;—Ellen—why,
My cousin, turn away thine eye?
And Græme; in whom I hope to know
Full soon a noble friend or foe,
When age shall give thee thy command,
And leading in thy native land,—
List all!—The king's vindictive pride
Boasts to have tamed the border-side,[14]
Where chiefs, with hound and hawk who came
To share their monarch's sylvan game,
Themselves in bloody toils were snared,
And when the banquet they prepared,
And wide their loyal portals flung,
O'er their own gateway struggling hung.
Loud cries their blood from Meggat's mead,
From Yarrow braes, and banks of Tweed,
Where the lone streams of Ettrick glide,
And from the silver Teviot's side;
The dales where martial clans did ride
Are now one sheep-walk waste and wide.
This tyrant of the Scottish throne,
So faithless and so ruthless known,
Now hither comes; his end the same,
The same pretext of sylvan game.
What grace for highland chiefs judge ye,
By fate of border chivalry.[15]
Yet more; amid Glenfinlas' green,
Douglas, thy stately form was seen.
This by espial sure I know;
Your counsel in the streight I show."—

XXIX.

Ellen and Margaret fearfully
Sought comfort in each other's eye,
Then turned their ghastly look, each one,
This to her sire, that to her son.
The hasty colour went and came
In the bold cheek of Malcolm Græme:
But from his glance it well appeared,
'Twas but for Ellen that he feared;
While sorrowful, but undismayed,
The Douglas thus his counsel said:
"Brave Roderick, though the tempest roar,
It may but thunder and pass o'er;
Nor will I here remain an hour,
To draw the lightning on thy bower;
For, well thou know'st, at this gray head
The royal bolt were fiercest sped.
For thee, who, at thy king's command,
Canst aid him with a gallant band,
Submission, homage, humbled pride,
Shall turn the monarch's wrath aside.

Poor remnants of the bleeding heart,
Ellen and I will seek, apart,
The refuge of some forest cell,
There, like the hunted quarry, dwell,
Till on the mountain and the moor,
The stern pursuit be past and o'er."—

XXX.

"No, by mine honour," Roderick said,
"So help me, heaven, and my good blade!
No, never! blasted be yon pine,
My fathers' ancient crest and mine,
If from its shade in danger part
The lineage of the bleeding heart!
Hear my blunt speech, grant me this maid
To wife, thy counsel to mine aid;
To Douglas, leagued with Roderick Dhu,
Will friends and allies flock enow;
Like cause of doubt, distrust, and grief,
Will bind to us each western chief.
When the loud pipes my bridal tell,
The links of Forth shall hear the knell,
The guards shall start in Stirling's porch;
And, when I light the nuptial torch,
A thousand villages in flames
Shall scare the slumbers of king James!
—Nay, Ellen, blench not thus away,
And, mother, cease these signs, I pray;
I meant not all my heart might say.
Small need of inroad, or of fight,
When the sage Douglas may unite
Each mountain clan in friendly band,
To guard the passes of their land,
Till the foiled king, from pathless glen,
Shall bootless turn him home again."

XXXI.

There are who have, at midnight hour,
In slumber sealed a dizzy tower,
And, on the verge that beetled o'er
The ocean-tide's incessant roar,
Dreamed calmly out their dangerous dream,
Till wakened by the morning beam,
When, dazzled by the eastern glow,
Such startler cast his glance below,
And saw unmeasured depth around,
And heard unintermitted sound,
And thought the battled fence so frail,
It waved like cobweb in the gale;
Amid his senses' giddy wheel,
Did he not desperate impulse feel,
Headlong to plunge himself below,
And meet the worst his fears foreshow?—
Thus, Ellen, dizzy and astound,
As sudden ruin yawned around,
By crossing terrors wildly tossed,
Still for the Douglas fearing most,
Could scarce the desperate thought withstand,
To buy his safety with her hand.

XXXII.

Such purpose dread could Malcolm spy
In Ellen's quivering lip and eye,
And eager rose to speak—but ere
His tongue could hurry forth his fear,
Had Douglas marked the hectic strife,
Where death seemed combating with life;
For to her cheek, in feverish flood,
One instant rushed the throbbing blood,
Then ebbing back, with sudden sway,
Left its domain as wan as clay.
"Roderick, enough! enough!" he cried,
"My daughter cannot be thy bride;

Not that the blush to wooer dear,
Nor paleness that of maiden fear.
It may not be—forgive her, chief,
Nor hazard aught for our relief.
Against his sovereign, Douglas ne'er
Will level a rebellious spear.
'Twas I that taught his youthful hand
To rein a steed and wield a brand;
I see him yet, the princely boy!
Not Ellen more my pride and joy:
I love him still, despite my wrongs,
By hasty wrath and slanderous tongues.
O seek the grace you well may find,
Without a cause to mine combined."

XXXIII.

Twice through the hall the chieftain strode;
The waving of his tartans broad,
And darkened brow, where wounded pride
With ire and disappointment vied,
Seemed, by the torch's gloomy light,
Like the ill demon of the night,
Stooping his pinions' shadowy sway
Upon the 'nighted pilgrim's way:
But, unrequited love! thy dart
Plunged deepest its envenomed smart,
And Roderick, with thine anguish stung,
At length the hand of Douglas wrung,
While eyes, that mocked at tears before,
With bitter drops were running o'er.
The death pangs of long-cherished hope
Scarce in that ample breast had scope,
But, struggling with his spirit proud,
Convulsive heaved its chequered shroud,
While every sob—so mute were all—
Was heard distinctly through the hall.
The son's despair, the mother's look,
Ill might the gentle Ellen brook;
She rose, and to her side there came,
To aid her parting steps, the Græme.

XXXIV.

Then Roderick from the Douglas broke—
As flashes flame through sable smoke,
Kindling its wreaths, long, dark, and low,
To one broad blaze of ruddy glow,
So the deep anguish of despair
Burst, in fierce jealousy, to air.—
With stalwart grasp his hand he laid
On Malcolm's breast and belted plaid:
"Back, beardless boy!" he sternly said,
"Back, minion! hold'st thou thus at naught
The lesson I so lately taught?
This roof, the Douglas, and that maid,
Thank thou for punishment delayed."
Eager as greyhound on his game,
Fiercely with Roderick grappled Græme.
"Perish my name, if aught afford
Its chieftain safety, save his sword!"
Thus as they strove, their desperate hand
Griped to the dagger or the brand,
And death had been—but Douglas rose,
And thrust between the struggling foes
His giant strength:—"Chieftains, forego!
I hold the first who strikes, my foe.—
Madmen, forbear your frantic jar!
What! is the Douglas fallen so far,
His daughter's hand is deemed the spoil
Of such dishonourable broil!"
Sullen and slowly they unclasp,
As struck with shame, their desperate grasp,
And each upon his rival glared,
With foot advanced, and blade half bared.

XXXV.

Ere yet the brands aloft were flung,
Margaret on Roderick's mantle hung,
And Malcolm heard his Ellen scream,
As faltered through terrific dream.
Then Roderick plunged in sheath his sword,
And veiled his wrath in scornful word.
"Rest safe till morning; pity 'twere
Such cheek should feel the midnight air![16]
Then mayest thou to James Stuart tell,
Roderick will keep the lake and fell,
Nor lackey, with his freeborn clan,
The pageant pomp of earthly man.
More would he of Clan-Alpine know,
Thou canst our strength and passes show.—
Malise, what ho!"—his hench-man came;[17]
"Give our safe-conduct to the Græme."
Young Malcolm answered, calm and bold,
"Fear nothing for thy favourite hold:
The spot an angel deigned to grace,
Is blessed though robbers haunt the place.
Thy churlish courtesy for those
Reserve, who fear to be thy foes.
As safe to me the mountain way
At midnight, as in blaze of day,
Though with his boldest at his back,
E'en Roderick Dhu beset the track.—
Brave Douglas,—lovely Ellen, nay,
Nought here of parting will I say.
Earth does not hold a lonesome glen,
So secret, but we meet agen.—
Chieftain! we too shall find an hour."
He said, and left the sylvan bower.

XXXVI.

Old Allan followed to the strand,
(Such was the Douglas's command,)
And anxious told, how, on the morn,
The stern sir Roderick deep had sworn,
The fiery cross should circle o'er
Dale, glen, and valley, down, and moor.
Much were the peril to the Græme,
From those who to the signal came:
Far up the lake 'twere safest land,
Himself would row him to the strand.
He gave his counsel to the wind,
While Malcolm did, unheeding, bind,
Round dirk, and pouch, and broadsword rolled,
His ample plaid in tightened fold,
And stripped his limbs to such array,
As best might suit the watery way.

XXXVII.

Then spoke abrupt: "Farewell to thee,
Pattern of old fidelity!"
The minstrel's hand he kindly pressed,—
"O! could I point a place of rest!
My sovereign holds in ward my land,
My uncle leads my vassal band,
To tame his foes, his friends to aid,
Poor Malcolm has but heart and blade.
Yet, if there be one faithful Græme,
Who loves the chieftain of his name,
Not long shall honoured Douglas dwell,
Like hunted stag, in mountain cell;
Nor, ere yon pride-swollen robber dare,—
I may not give the rest to air!—
Tell Roderick Dhu, I owed him nought,
Not the poor service of a boat,
To waft me to yon mountain side."—
Then plunged he in the flashing tide.
Bold o'er the flood his head he bore,
And stoutly steered him from the shore;
And Allan strained his anxious eye
Far mid the lake, his form to spy
Darkening across each puny wave,
To which the moon her silver gave.
Fast as the cormorant could skim,
The swimmer plied each active limb;
Then, landing in the moonlight dell,
Loud shouted of his weal to tell.
The minstrel heard the far halloo,
And joyful from the shore withdrew.

CANTO III.

THE GATHERING.

I.

TIME rolls his ceaseless course. The race of yore
Who danced our infancy upon their knee,
And told our marvelling boyhood legends store,
Of their strange ventures happ'd by land or sea,
How are they blotted from the things that be!
How few, all weak and withered of their force,
Wait, on the verge of dark eternity,
Like stranded wrecks, the tide returning hoarse,
To sweep them from our sight! Time rolls his ceaseless course.

Yet live there still who can remember well,
How, when a mountain chief his bugle blew,
Both field and forest, dingle, cliff, and dell,
And solitary heath, the signal knew;
And fast the faithful clan around him drew,
What time the warning note was keenly wound,
What time aloft their kindred banner flew,
While clamorous war-pipes yelled the gathering sound,
And while the fiery cross glanced, like a meteor, round.[1]

II.

The summer dawn's reflected hue
To purple changed Loch-Katrine blue;
Mildly and soft the western breeze
Just kissed the lake, just stirred the trees,
And the pleased lake, like maiden coy,
Trembled, but dimpled not for joy;
The mountain shadows on her breast
Were neither broken nor at rest;
In bright uncertainty they lie,
Like future joys to fancy's eye.
The water lily to the light
Her chalice reared of silver bright;
The doe awoke, and to the lawn,
Begemmed with dew-drops, led her fawn;
The gray mist left the mountain side,
The torrent showed its glistening pride;
Invisible in fleeked sky,
The lark sent down her revelry;
The black-bird and the speckled thrush
Good-morrow gave from brake and bush;
In answer cooed the cushat dove
Her notes of peace, and rest, and love.

III.

No thought of peace, no thought of rest,
Assuaged the storm in Roderick's breast.
With sheathed broadsword in his hand,
Abrupt he paced the islet strand,
And eyed the rising sun, and laid
His hand on his impatient blade.
Beneath a rock, his vassal's care
Was prompt the ritual to prepare,
With deep and deathful meaning fraught;
For such antiquity had taught
Was preface meet, ere yet abroad
The cross of fire should take its road.

The shrinking band stood oft aghast
At the impatient glance he cast;—
Such glance the mountain eagle threw,
As, from the cliffs of Ben-venue,
She spread her dark sails on the wind,
And, high in middle heaven reclined,
With her broad shadow on the lake,
Silenced the warblers of the brake.

IV.

A heap of withered boughs was piled,
Of juniper and rowan wild,
Mingled with shivers from the oak,
Rent by the lightning's recent stroke.
Brian, the hermit, by it stood,
Barefooted, in his frock and hood.
His grisled beard and matted hair
Obscured a visage of despair;
His naked arms and legs, seamed o'er,
The scars of frantic penance bore.
That monk, of savage form and face,[2]
The impending danger of his race
Had drawn from deepest solitude,
Far in Benharrow's bosom rude.
Not his the mien of Christain priest,
But Druid's, from the grave released,
Whose hardened heart and eye might brook
On human sacrifice to look;
And much, 'twas said, of heathen lore
Mixed in the charms he muttered o'er.
The hallowed creed gave only worse
And deadlier emphasis of curse;
No peasant sought that hermit's prayer,
His cave the pilgrim shunned with care;
The eager huntsman knew his bound,
And in mid chase called off his hound;
Or if, in lonely glen or strath,
The desert-dweller met his path,
He prayed, and signed the cross between,
While terror took devotion's mien.

V.

Of Brian's birth strange tales were told;[3]
His mother watched a midnight fold,
Built deep within a dreary glen,
Where scattered lay the bones of men,
In some forgotten battle slain,
And bleached by drifting wind and rain.
It might have tamed a warrior's heart,
To view such mockery of his art!
The knot-grass fettered there the hand,
Which once could burst an iron band;
Beneath the broad and ample bone,
That buckler'd heart to fear unknown,
A feeble and a timorous guest,
The field-fare framed her lowly nest;
There the slow blind-worm left his slime
On the fleet limbs that mocked at time;
And there, too, lay the leader's skull,
Still wreathed with chaplet, flushed and full,
For heath-bell, with her purple bloom,
Supplied the bonnet and the plume.
All night, in this sad glen, the maid
Sate, shrouded in her mantle's shade:
She said, no shepherd sought her side,
No hunter's hand her snood untied,
Yet ne'er again to braid her hair
The virgin snood did Alice wear;[4]
Gone was her maiden glee and sport,
Her maiden girdle all too short,
Nor sought she, from that fatal night,
Or holy church, or blessed rite,
But locked her secret in her breast,
And died in travail, unconfessed.

VI.

Alone, among his young compeers,
Was Brian from his infant years;
A moody and heart-broken boy,
Estranged from sympathy and joy,
Bearing each taunt which careless tongue
On his mysterious lineage flung.
Whole nights he spent by moonlight pale,
To wood and stream his hap to wail,
Till, frantic, he as truth received
What of his birth the crowd believed,
And sought, in mist and meteor fire,
To meet and know his phantom sire!
In vain, to sooth his wayward fate,
The cloister oped her pitying gate;
In vain, the learning of the age
Unclasped the sable-lettered page;
E'en in its treasures he could find
Food for the fever of his mind.
Eager he read whatever tells
Of magic, cabala, and spells,
And every dark pursuit allied
To curious and presumptuous pride;
Till, with fired brain and nerves o'erstrung,
And heart with mystic horrors wrung,
Desperate he sought Benharrow's den,
And hid him from the haunts of men.

VII.

The desert gave him visions wild,
Such as might suit the spectre's child.[5]
Where with black cliffs the torrents toil,
He watched the wheeling eddies boil,
Till, from their foam, his dazzled eyes
Beheld the river demon rise;
The mountain-mist took form and limb,
Of noontide hag, or goblin grim;
The midnight wind came wild and dread,
Swelled with the voices of the dead;
Far on the future battle-heath
His eye beheld the ranks of death:
Thus the lone seer, from mankind hurled,
Shaped forth a disembodied world.
One lingering sympathy of mind
Still bound him to the mortal kind;
The only parent he could claim
Of ancient Alpine's lineage came.
Late had he heard in prophet's dream,
The fatal Ben-Shie's boding scream;[6]
Sounds, too, had come in midnight blast,
Of charging steeds, careering fast
Along Benharrow's shingly side,
Where mortal horseman ne'er might ride:[7]
The thunder-bolt had split the pine,—
All augured ill to Alpine's line.
He girt his loins, and came to show
The signals of impending wo,
And now stood prompt to bless or ban,
As bade the chieftain of his clan.

VIII.

'Twas all prepared;—and from the rock,
A goat, the patriarch of the flock,
Before the kindling pile was laid,
And pierced by Roderick's ready blade.
Patient the sickening victim eyed
The life-blood ebb in crimson tide,
Down his clogged beard and shaggy limb,
Till darkness glazed his eye-balls dim.
The grisly priest, with murmuring prayer,
A slender crosslet, formed with care,

A cubit's length in measure due;
The shafts and limbs were rods of yew,
Whose parents in Inch-Cailliach wave
Their shadows o'er Clan-Alpine's grave,[8]
And, answering Lomond's breezes deep,
Sooth many a chieftain's endless sleep.
The cross, thus formed, he held on high,
With wasted hand, and haggard eye,
And strange and mingled feelings woke,
While his anathema he spoke:

IX.

"Wo to the clansman, who shall view
This symbol of sepulchral yew,
Forgetful that its branches grew
Where weep the heavens their holiest dew
On Alpine's dwelling low!
Deserter of his chieftain's trust,
He ne'er shall mingle with their dust,
But, from his sires and kindred thrust,
Each clansman's execration just
Shall doom him wrath and wo."
He paused;—the word the vassals took,
With forward step and fiery look,
On high their naked brands they shook,
Their clattering targets wildly strook;
And first, in murmur low,
Then, like the billow in his course,
That far to seaward finds his source,
And flings to shore his mustered force,
Burst, with loud roar, their answer hoarse,
"Wo to the traitor, wo!"
Ben-an's gray scalp the accents knew,
The joyous wolf from covert drew,
The exulting eagle screamed afar,—
They knew the voice of Alpine's war.

X.

The shout was hushed on lake and fell,
The monk resumed his muttered spell.
Dismal and low its accents came,
The while he scathed the cross with flame;
And the few words that reached the air,
Although the holiest name was there,
Had more of blasphemy than prayer.
But when he shook above the crowd
Its kindled points, he spoke aloud:—
"Wo to the wretch, who fails to rear
At this dread sign the ready spear!
For, as the flames this symbol sear,
His home, the refuge of his fear,
A kindred fate shall know;
Far o'er its roof the volumed flame
Clan-Alpine's vengeance shall proclaim,
While maids and matrons on his name
Shall call down wretchedness and shame,
And infamy and wo."
Then rose the cry of females, shrill
As goss-hawk's whistle on the hill,
Denouncing misery and ill,
Mingled with childhood's babbling trill
Of curses stammered slow,
Answering, with imprecation dread,
"Sunk be his home in embers red!
And cursed be the meanest shed
That e'er shall hide the houseless head,
We doom to want and wo!"
A sharp and shrieking echo gave,
Coir-Uriskin, thy goblin cave!
And the gray pass where birches wave,
On Beala-nam-bo.

XI.

Then deeper paused the priest anew,
And hard his labouring breath he drew,
While, with set teeth and clenched hand,
And eyes that glowed like fiery brand,
He meditated curse more dread,
And deadlier on the clans-man's head,
Who, summoned to his chieftain's aid,
The signal saw and disobeyed.
The crosslet's points of sparkling wood
He quenched among the bubbling blood,
And, as again the sign he reared,
Hollow and hoarse his voice was heard:
"When flits this cross from man to man,
Vich-Alpine's summons to his clan,
Burst be the ear that fails to heed!
Palsied the foot that shuns to speed!
May ravens tear the careless eyes,
Wolves make the coward heart their prize!
As sinks that blood-stream in the earth,
So may his heart's blood drench his hearth!
As dies in hissing gore the spark,
Quench thou his light, destruction dark!
And be the grace to him denied,
Bought by this sign to all beside!"—
He ceased: no echo gave agen
The murmur of the deep amen.

XII.

Then Roderick, with impatient look,
From Brian's hand the symbol took:
"Speed, Malise, speed!" he said, and gave
The crosslet to his hench-man brave.
"The muster-place be Lanrie mead—
Instant the time—speed, Malise, speed!"
Like heath-bird, when the hawks pursue,
A barge across Loch-Katrine flew:
High stood the hench-man on the prow,
So rapidly the barge-men row,
The bubbles, where they lanched the boat,
Were all unbroken and afloat,
Dancing in foam and ripple still,
When it had neared the mainland hill;
And from the silver beach's side
Still was the prow three fathom wide,
When lightly bounded to the land
The messenger of blood and brand.

XIII.

Speed, Malise, speed! the dun deer's hide
On fleeter foot was never tied.[9]
Speed, Malise, speed! such cause of haste
Thine active sinews never braced.
Bend 'gainst the steepy hill thy breast,
Burst down like torrent from its crest;
With short and springing footstep pass
The trembling bog and false morass;
Across the brook like roebuck bound,
And thread the brake like questing hound;
The crag is high, the scaur is deep,
Yet shrink not from the desperate leap;
Parched are thy burning lips and brow,
Yet by the fountain pause not now;
Herald of battle, fate, and fear,
Stretch onward in thy fleet career!
The wounded hind thou track'st not now,
Pursuest not maid through green-wood bough,
Nor pliest thou now thy flying pace,
With rivals in the mountain-race;
But danger, death, and warrior deed,
Are in thy course—Speed, Malise, speed!

XIV.

Fast as the fatal symbol flies,
In arms the huts and hamlets rise;
From winding glen, from upland brown,
They poured each hardy tenant down.

Nor slacked the messenger his pace;
He showed the sign, he named the place,
And, pressing forward like the wind,
Left clamour and surprise behind.
The fisherman forsook the strand,
The swarthy smith took dirk and brand;
With changed cheer, the mower blith
Left in the half cut swathe his sithe;
The herds without a keeper strayed,
The plough was in mid-furrow staid,
The falc'ner tossed his hawk away,
The hunter left the stag at bay;
Prompt at the signal of alarms,
Each son of Alpine rushed to arms;
So swept the tumult and affray
Along the margin of Achray.
Alas! thou lovely lake! that e'er
Thy banks should echo sounds of fear!
The rocks, the bosky thickets, sleep
So stilly on thy bosom deep,
The lark's blith carol, from the cloud,
Seems for the scene too gayly loud.

XV.

Speed, Malise, speed! the lake is past,
Duncraggan's huts appear at last,
And peep, like moss-grown rocks, half seen,
Half hidden in the copse so green:
There mayst thou rest, thy labour done,
Their lord shall speed the signal on.—
As stoops the hawk upon his prey,
The hench-man shot him down the way.
What woful accents load the gale?
The funeral yell, the female wail!—
A gallant hunter's sport is o'er,
A valiant warrior fights no more.
Who, in the battle or the chase,
At Roderick's side shall fill his place?
Within the hall, where torches' ray
Supplied the excluded beams of day,
Lies Duncan on his lowly bier,
And o'er him streams his widow's tear.
His stripling son stands mournful by,
His youngest weeps, but knows not why;
The village maids and matrons round
The dismal coronach*[10] resound.

XVI.

CORONACH.

He is gone on the mountain,
He is lost to the forest,
Like a summer-dried fountain,
When our need was the sorest.
The font, reappearing,
From the rain drops shall borrow,
But to us comes no cheering,
To Duncan no morrow!

The hand of the reaper
Takes the ears that are hoary,
But the voice of the weeper
Wails manhood in glory;
The autumn winds rushing
Waft the leaves that are searest,
But our flower was in flushing,
When blighting was nearest.

Fleet foot on the correi,†
Sage counsel in cumber,
Red hand in the foray,
How sound is thy slumber!

Like the dew on the mountain,
Like the foam on the river,
Like the bubble on the fountain,
Thou art gone, and for ever!

XVII.

See Stumah,* who, the bier beside,
His master's corpse with wonder eyed,
Poor Stumah! whom his least halloo
Could send like lightning o'er the dew,
Bristles his crest, and points his ears,
As if some stranger step he hears.
'Tis not a mourner's muffled tread,
Who comes to sorrow o'er the dead.
But headlong haste, or deadly fear,
Urge the precipitate career.
All stand aghast:—unheeding all,
The hench-man bursts into the hall:
Before the dead man's bier he stood,
Held forth the cross besmeared with blood;
"The muster-place is Lanric mead;
Speed forth the signal! clansmen, speed!"

XVIII.

Angus, the heir of Duncan's line,
Sprung forth and seized the fatal sign.
In haste the stripling to his side
His father's dirk and broad-sword tied;
But when he saw his mother's eye
Watch him in speechless agony,
Back to her opened arms he flew,
Pressed on her lips a fond adieu—
"Alas!" she sobbed,—"and yet be gone,
And speed thee forth like Duncan's son!"
One look he cast upon the bier,
Dashed from his eye the gathering tear,
Breathed deep, to clear his labouring breast,
And tossed aloft his bonnet crest,
Then, like the high-bred colt, when, freed,
First he essays his fire and speed,
He vanished, and o'er moor and moss
Sped forward with the fiery cross.
Suspended was the widow's tear,
While yet his footsteps she could hear;
And when she marked the hench-man's eye
Wet with unwonted sympathy,
"Kinsman," she said, "his race is run,
That should have sped thine errand on;
The oak has fallen—the sapling bough
Is all Duncraggan's shelter now.
Yet trust I well, his duty done,
The orphan's God will guard my son.—
And you, in many a danger true,
At Duncan's hest your blades that drew,
To arms, and guard that orphan's head!
Let babes and women wail the dead."
Then weapon-clang, and martial call,
Resounded through the funeral hall,
While from the walls the attendant band
Snatched sword and targe, with hurried hand;
And short and flitting energy
Glanced from the mourner's sunken eye,
As if the sounds, to warrior dear,
Might rouse her Duncan from his bier.
But faded soon that borrowed force;
Grief claimed his right, and tears their course.

XIX.

Benledi saw the cross of fire,
It glanced like lightning up Strath-Ire.[11]
O'er dale and hill the summons flew,
Nor rest nor pause young Angus knew;

* Funeral song.

† Or *corri*—The hollow side of the hill, where game usually lies.

* *Faithful*—The name of a dog.

The tear that gathered in his eye,
He left the mountain breeze to dry;
Until, where Teith's young waters roll,
Betwixt him and a wooded knoll,
That graced the sable strath with green,
The chapel of saint Bride was seen.
Swoln was the stream, remote the bridge,
But Angus paused not on the edge;
Though the dark waves danced dizzily,
Though reeled his sympathetic eye,
He dashed amid the torrent's roar;
His right hand high the crosslet bore,
His left the pole-axe grasped, to guide
And stay his footing in the tide.
He stumbled twice—the foam splashed high,
With hoarser swell the stream raced by;
And had he fallen,—forever there,
Farewell Duncraggan's orphan heir!
But still, as if in parting life,
Firmer he grasped the cross of strife,
Until the opposing bank he gained,
And up the chapel pathway strained.

XX.

A blithsome rout, that morning tide,
Had sought the chapel of saint Bride.
Her troth Tombea's Mary gave
To Norman, heir of Armandave,
And, issuing from the Gothic arch,
The bridal now resumed their march.
In rude, but glad procession, came
Bonnetted sire and coif-clad dame;
And plaided youth, with jest and jeer,
Which snooded maiden would not hear;
And children, that, unwitting why,
Lent the gay shout their shrilly cry;
And minstrels, that in measures vied
Before the young and bonny bride,
Whose downcast eye and cheek disclose
The tear and blush of morning rose.
With virgin step, and bashful hand,
She held the kerchief's snowy band;
The gallant bridegroom, by her side,
Beheld his prize with victor's pride,
And the glad mother in her ear
Was closely whispering word of cheer.

XXI.

Who meets them at the church-yard gate?—
The messenger of fear and fate!
Haste in his hurried accent lies,
And grief is swimming in his eyes.
All dripping from the recent flood,
Panting and travel-soiled he stood,
The fatal sign of fire and sword
Held forth, and spoke the appointed word;
"The muster-place is Lanric mead;
Speed forth the signal! Norman, speed!"—
And must he change so soon the hand,
Just linked to his by holy band,
For the fell cross of blood and brand?
And must the day, so blith that rose,
And promised rapture in the close,
Before its setting hour, divide
The bridegroom from the plighted bride?
O fatal doom!—it must! it must!
Clan-Alpine's cause, her chieftain's trust,
Her summons dread, brooks no delay;
Stretch to the race—away! away!

XXII.

Yet slow he laid his plaid aside,
And, lingering, eyed his lovely bride,
Until he saw the starting tear
Speak wo he might not stop to cheer;
Then, trusting not a second look,
In haste he sped him up the brook,
Nor backward glanced till on the heath,
Where Lubnaig's lake supplies the Teith.—
What in the racer's bosom stirred?—
The sickened pang of hope deferred,
And memory, with a torturing train
Of all his morning visions vain.
Mingled with love's impatience, came
The manly thirst for martial fame:
The stormy joy of mountaineers,
Ere yet they rush upon the spears;
And zeal for clan and chieftain burning,
And hope, from well-fought field returning,
With war's red honours on his crest,
To clasp his Mary to his breast.
Stung by his thoughts, o'er bank and brae,
Like fire from flint he glanced away,
While high resolve, and feeling strong,
Burst into voluntary song.

XXIII.

SONG.

The heath this night must be my bed,
The bracken* curtain for my head,
My lullaby the warder's tread,
Far, far from love and thee, Mary!
To-morrow eve, more stilly laid,
My couch may be my bloody plaid,
My vesper song, thy wail, sweet maid!
It will not waken me, Mary!

I may not, dare not, fancy now
The grief that clouds thy lovely brow,
I dare not think upon thy vow,
And all it promised me, Mary!
No fond regret must Norman know;
When bursts Clan-Alpine on the foe,
His heart must be like bended bow,
His foot like arrow free, Mary!

A time will come with feeling fraught;
For, if I fall in battle fought,
Thy hapless lover's dying thought
Shall be a thought on thee, Mary!
And if returned from conquered foes,
How blithly will the evening close,
How sweet the linnet sing repose,
To my young bride and me, Mary!

XXIV.

Not faster o'er thy heathery braes,
Balquidder, speeds the midnight blaze,[12]
Rushing, in conflagration strong,
Thy deep ravines and dells along,
Wrapping thy cliffs in purple glow,
And reddening the dark lakes below;
Nor faster speeds it, nor so far,
As o'er thy heaths the voice of war.
The signal roused to martial coil
The sullen margin of Loch-Voil,
Waked still Loch-Doine, and to the source
Alarmed, Balvaig, thy swampy course;
Thence, southward turned its rapid road
Adown Strath-Gartney's valley broad,
Till rose in arms each man might claim
A portion in Clan-Alpine's name;
From the gray sire, whose trembling hand
Could hardly buckle on his brand,
To the raw boy, whose shaft and bow
Were yet scarce terror to the crow.

* *Bracken*—Fern.

Each valley, each sequestered glen,
Mustered its little horde of men,
That met as torrents from the height
In highland dales their streams unite,
Still gathering, as they pour along,
A voice more loud, a tide more strong,
Till at the rendezvous they stood
By hundreds, prompt for blows and blood;
Each trained to arms since life began,
Owning no tie but to his clan,
No oath, but by his chieftain's hand,[13]
No law, but Roderick Dhu's command.

XXV.

That summer morn had Roderick Dhu
Surveyed the skirts of Ben-venue,
And sent his scouts o'er hill and heath,
To view the frontiers of Menteith.
All backward came with news of truce;
Still lay each martial Græme and Bruce,
In Rednock courts no horsemen wait,
No banner waved on Cardross gate,
On Duchray's towers no beacon shone,
Nor scared the herons from Loch-Con:
All seemed at peace.—Now, wot ye why
The chieftain, with such anxious eye,
Ere to the muster he repair,
This western frontier scanned with care?—
In Ben-venue's most darksome cleft,
A fair, though cruel, pledge was left;
For Douglas, to his promise true,
That morning from the isle withdrew,
And in a deep sequestered dell
Had sought a low and lonely cell.
By many a bard, in celtic tongue,
Has Coir-nan-Uriskin[14] been sung;
A softer name the Saxons gave,
And called the grot the Goblin-cave.

XXVI.

It was a wild and strange retreat,
As e'er was trod by outlaw's feet.
The dell, upon the mountain's crest,
Yawned like a gash on warrior's breast;
Its trench had stayed full many a rock,
Hurled by primeval earthquake shock
From Ben-venue's gray summit wild;
And here, in random ruin piled,
They frowned incumbent o'er the spot,
And formed the rugged sylvan grot.
The oak and birch, with mingled shade,
At noontide there a twilight made,
Unless when short and sudden shone
Some straggling beam on cliff or stone,
With such a glimpse as prophet's eye
Gains on thy depth, futurity.
No murmur waked the solemn still,
Save tinkling of a fountain rill;
But when the wind chafed with the lake,
A sullen sound would upward break,
With dashing hollow voice, that spoke
The incessant war of wave and rock.
Suspended cliffs, with hideous sway,
Seemed nodding o'er the cavern gray.
From such a den the wolf had sprung,
In such the wild-cat leaves her young:
Yet Douglas and his daughter fair,
Sought, for a space, their safety there.
Gray superstition's whisper dread
Debarred the spot to vulgar tread:
For there, she said, did fays resort,
And satyrs* hold their sylvan court,

* The *Urisk*, or highland satyr.—See note.

By moonlight tread their mystic maze,
And blast the rash beholder's gaze.

XXVII.

Now eve, with western shadows long,
Floated on Katrine bright and strong,
When Roderick, with a chosen few,
Repassed the heights of Ben-venue.
Above the goblin-cave they go,
Through the wild pass of Beal-nam-bo;[15]
The prompt retainers speed before,
To launch the shallop from the shore,
For 'cross Loch-Katrine lies his way,
To view the passes of Achray,
And place his clansmen in array.
Yet lags the chief in musing mind,
Unwonted sight, his men behind.
A single page, to bear his sword,
Alone attended on his lord;[16]
The rest their way through thickets break,
And soon await him by the lake.
It was a fair and gallant sight,
To view them from the neighbouring height,
By the low levelled sunbeam's light;
For strength and stature, from the clan
Each warrior was a chosen man,
As e'en afar might well be seen,
By their proud step and martial mien.
Their feathers dance, their tartans float,
Their targets gleam, as by the boat
A wild and warlike group they stand,
That well became such mountain strand.

XXVIII.

Their chief, with step reluctant, still
Was lingering on the craggy hill,
Hard by where turned apart the road
To Douglas's obscure abode.
It was but with that dawning morn
That Roderick Dhu had proudly sworn,
To drown his love in war's wild roar,
Nor think of Ellen Douglas more;
But he who stems a stream with sand,
And fetters flame with flaxen band,
Has yet a harder task to prove—
By firm resolve to conquer love!
Eve finds the chief, like restless ghost,
Still hovering near his treasure lost;
For though his haughty heart deny
A parting meeting to his eye,
Still fondly strains his anxious ear,
The accents of her voice to hear,
And inly did he curse the breeze
That waked to sound the rustling trees.
But hark! what mingles in the strain?
It is the harp of Allan-bane,
That wakes its measures slow and high,
Attuned to sacred minstrelsy.
What melting voice attends the strings?
'Tis Ellen, or an angel, sings.

XXIX.

HYMN TO THE VIRGIN.

Ave Maria! maiden mild!
Listen to a maiden's prayer;
Thou canst hear though from the wild,
Thou canst save amid despair.
Safe may we sleep beneath thy care,
Though banished, outcast, and reviled—
Maiden! hear a maiden's prayer;
Mother, hear a suppliant child!
Ave Maria!

Ave Maria! undefiled!
The flinty couch we now must share

Shall seem with down of eider piled,
If thy protection hover there.
The murky cavern's heavy air
Shall breathe of balm if thou hast smiled;
Then, maiden, hear a maiden's prayer,
Mother, list a suppliant child!
Ave Maria!
Ave Maria! Stainless styled!
Foul demons of the earth and air,
From this their wonted haunt exiled,
Shall flee before thy presence fair.
We bow us to thy lot of care,
Beneath thy guidance reconciled;
Hear for a maid a maiden's prayer,
And for a father hear a child!
Ave Maria!

XXX.

Died on the harp the closing hymn—
Unmoved in attitude and limb,
As listening still, Clan-Alpine's lord
Stood leaning on his heavy sword,
Until the page, with humble sign,
Twice pointed to the sun's decline.
Then, while his plaid he round him cast,
"It is the last time—'tis the last,"—
He muttered thrice,—"the last time e'er
That angel-voice shall Roderick hear!"
It was a goading thought—his stride
Hied hastier down the mountain side;
Sullen he flung him in the boat,
And instant cross the lake it shot.
They landed in that silvery bay,
And eastward held their hasty way,
Till, with the latest beams of light,
The band arrived on Lanrie height,
Where mustered, in the vale below,
Clan-Alpine's men in martial show.

XXXI.

A various scene the clansmen made,
Some sate, some stood, some slowly strayed;
But most, with mantles folded round,
Were couched to rest upon the ground,
Scarce to be known by curious eye,
From the deep heather where they lie,
So well was matched the tartan screen
With heath-bell dark and brackens green;
Unless where, here and there, a blade,
Or lance's point, a glimmer made,
Like glow-worm twinkling through the shade.
But when, advancing through the gloom,
They saw the chieftain's eagle plume,
Their shout of welcome, shrill and wide,
Shook the steep mountain's steady side.
Thrice it arose, and lake and fell
Three times returned the martial yell;
It died upon Bochastle's plain,
And silence claimed her evening reign.

CANTO IV.

THE PROPHECY.

I.

"The rose is fairest when 'tis budding new,
And hope is brightest when it dawns from fears;
The rose is sweetest washed with morning dew,
And love is loveliest when embalmed in tears.
O wilding rose, whom fancy thus endears,
I bid your blossoms in my bonnet wave,
Emblem of hope and love through future years!"
Thus spoke young Norman, heir of Armandave,
What time the sun arose on Vennachar's broad wave.

II.

Such fond conceit, half said, half sung,
Love prompted to the bridegroom's tongue.
All while he stripped the wild-rose spray,
His axe and bow beside him lay,
For on a pass 'twixt lake and wood,
A wakeful sentinel he stood.
Hark!—on the rock a footstep rung,
And instant to his arms he sprung.
"Stand, or thou diest!—What, Malise!—soon
Art thou returned from braes of Doune.
By thy keen step and glance I know,
Thou bring'st us tidings of the foe."—
(For while the fiery cross hied on,
On distant scout had Malise gone.)
"Where sleeps the chief?" the heneh-man said.
"Apart, in yonder misty glade;
To his lone couch I'll be your guide."—
Then called a slumberer by his side,
And stirred him with his slackened bow—
"Up, up, Glentarkin! rouse thee, ho!
We seek the chieftain; on the track,
Keep eagle watch till I come back."

III.

Together up the pass they sped:
"What of the foemen?" Norman said.—
"Varying reports from near and far:
This certain—that a band of war
Has for two days been ready boune,
At prompt command, to march from Doune;
King James, the while, with princely powers,
Holds revelry in Stirling towers.
Soon will this dark and gathering cloud
Speak on our glens in thunder loud.
Inured to bide such bitter bout,
The warrior's plaid may bear it out:
But, Norman, how wilt thou provide
A shelter for thy bonny bride?"—
"What! know ye not that Roderick's care
To the lone isle hath caused repair
Each maid and matron of the clan,
And every child and aged man
Unfit for arms; and given his charge,
Nor skiff nor shallop, boat nor barge,
Upon these lakes shall float at large,
But all beside the islet moor,
That such dear pledge may rest secure?"

IV.

"'Tis well advised—the chieftain's plan
Bespeaks the father of his clan.
But wherefore sleeps sir Roderick Dhu
Apart from all his followers true?"
"It is because last evening tide
Brian an augury hath tried,
Of that dread kind which must not be
Unless in dread extremity.
The taghairm called; by which, afar,
Our sires foresaw the events of war.[1]
Duncraggan's milk-white bull they slew."

MALISE.

"Ah! well the gallant brute I knew!
The choicest of the prey we had,
When swept our merry-men Gallangad.[2]
His hide was snow, his horns were dark,
His red eye glowed like fiery spark;
So fierce, so tameless, and so fleet,
Sore did he cumber our retreat,
And kept our stoutest kernes in awe,
E'en at the pass of Beal 'maha.
But steep and flinty was the road,
And sharp the hurrying pikeman's goad,

And when we came to Dennan's row
A child might scatheless stroke his brow."

V.

NORMAN.

"That bull was slain: his reeking hide
They stretched the cataract beside,
Whose waters their wild tumult toss
Adown the black and craggy boss
Of that huge cliff, whose ample verge
Tradition calls the Hero's Targe.[3]
Couched on a shelve beneath its brink,
Close where the thundering torrents sink,
Rocking beneath their headlong sway,
And drizzled by the ceaseless spray,
Midst groan of rock, and roar of stream,
The wizard waits prophetic dream.
Nor distant rests the chief;—but, hush!
See, gliding slow through mist and bush,
The hermit gains yon rock, and stands
To gaze upon our slumbering bands.
Seems he not, Malise, like a ghost,
That hovers o'er a slaughtered host?
Or raven on the blasted oak,
That, watching while the deer is broke,*
His morsel claims with sullen croak?"[4]
—"Peace! peace! to other than to me,
Thy words were evil augury;
But still I hold sir Roderick's blade
Clan-Alpine's omen and her aid,
Not aught that, gleaned from heaven or hell,
Yon fiend-begotten monk can tell.
The chieftain joins him, see—and now,
Together they descend the brow."—

VI.

And, as they came, with Alpine's lord
The hermit monk held solemn word:
"Roderick! it is a fearful strife,
For man endowed with mortal life,
Whose shroud of sentient clay can still
Feel feverish pang and fainting chill,
Whose eye can stare in stony trance,
Whose hair can rouse like warrior's lance,—
'Tis hard for such to view, unfurled,
The curtain of the future world.
Yet, witness every quaking limb,
My sunken pulse, mine eye-balls dim,
My soul with harrowing anguish torn,
This for my chieftain have I borne!—
The shapes that sought my fearful couch,
A human tongue may ne'er avouch;
No mortal man,—save he, who, bred
Between the living and the dead,
Is gifted beyond nature's law,—
Had e'er survived to say he saw.
At length the fateful answer came,
In characters of living flame!
Not spoke in word, nor blazed in scroll,
But borne and branded on my soul;—
Which spills the foremost foeman's life,
That party conquers in the strife."[5]

VII.

"Thanks, Brian, for thy zeal and care!
Good is thine augury, and fair.
Clan-Alpine ne'er in battle stood,
But first our broadswords tasted blood.
A surer victim still I know,
Self-offered to the auspicious blow:
A spy has sought my land this morn,
No eve shall witness his return!
My followers guard each pass's mouth,
To east, to westward, and to south;
Red Murdoch, bribed to be his guide,
Has charge to lead his steps aside,
Till, in deep path or dingle brown,
He light on those shall bring him down.—
But see, who comes his news to show!
Malise! what tidings of the foe?"

VIII.

"At Doune, o'er many a spear and glaive,
Two barons proud their banners wave,
I saw the Moray's silver star,
And marked the sable pale of Mar."—
"By Alpine's soul, high tidings those!
I love to hear of worthy foes.
When move they on?"—"To-morrow's noon
Will see them here for battle boune."
"Then shall it see a meeting stern!
But, for the place—say, couldst thou learn
Nought of the friendly clans of Earn?
Strengthened by them, we well might bide
The battle on Beneledi's side.—
Thou couldst not?—well! Clan-Alpine's men
Shall man the Trosach's shaggy glen;
Within Loch-Katrine's gorge we'll fight,
All in our maids' and matrons' sight,
Each for his hearth and household fire,
Father for child, and son for sire,
Lover for maid beloved!—but why—
Is it the breeze affects mine eye?
Or dost thou come, ill-omened tear,
A messenger of doubt and fear?
No! sooner may the Saxon lance
Unfix Beneledi from his stance,
Than doubt or terror can pierce through
The unyielding heart of Roderick Dhu!
'Tis stubborn as his trusty targe.—
Each to his post!—all know their charge."—
The pibroch sounds, the bands advance,
The broadswords gleam, the banners dance,
Obedient to the chieftain's glance.
I turn me from the martial roar,
And seek Coir-Uriskin once more.

IX.

Where is the Douglas?—he is gone;
And Ellen sits on the gray stone
Fast by the cave, and makes her moan;
While vainly Allan's words of cheer
Are poured on her unheeding ear.—
"He will return—dear lady, trust!
With joy return;—he will—he must.
Well was it time to seek, afar,
Some refuge from impending war,
When e'en Clan-Alpine's rugged swarm
Are cowed by the approaching storm.
I saw their boats, with many a light,
Floating the live-long yesternight,
Shifting like flashes darted forth
By the red streamers of the north;
I marked at morn how close they ride,
Thick moored by the lone islet's side.
Like wild ducks couching in the fen,
When stoops the hawk upon the glen.
Since this rude race dare not abide
The peril on the main-land side,
Shall not thy noble father's care
Some safe retreat for thee prepare?"—

X.

ELLEN.

"No, Allan, no! pretext so kind
My wakeful terrors could not blind.
When in such tender tone, yet grave,
Douglas a parting blessing gave,

* Quartered.—See note.

The tear that glistened in his eye
Drowned not his purpose fixed and high.
My soul, though feminine and weak,
Can image his, e'en as the lake,
Itself disturbed by slightest stroke,
Reflects the invulnerable rock.
He hears report of battle rife,
He deems himself the cause of strife.
I saw him redden when the theme
Turned, Allan, on thine idle dream,
Of Malcolm Græme in fetters bound,
Which I, thou saidst, about him wound.
Think'st thou he trowed thine omen aught?
Oh no! 'twas apprehensive thought
For the kind youth,—for Roderick too—
(Let me be just) that friend so true;
In danger both, and in our cause!
Minstrel, the Douglas dare not pause.
Why else that solemn warning given,
'If not on earth, we meet in heaven?'
Why else, to Cambus-Kenneth's fane,
If eve return him not again,
Am I to hie and make me known?
Alas! he goes to Scotland's throne,
Buys his friends' safety with his own;—
He goes to do—what I had done,
Had Douglas' daughter been his son!"

XI.

ALLAN.

"Nay, lovely Ellen!—dearest, nay!
If aught should his return delay,
He only named yon holy fane,
As fitting place to meet again.
Be sure he's safe: and for the Græme,
Heaven's blessing on his gallant name!
My visioned sight may yet prove true,
Nor bode of ill to him or you.
When did my gifted dream beguile?
Think of the stranger at the isle,
And think upon the harpings slow,
That presaged this approaching wo!
Sooth was my prophecy of fear;
Believe it when it augurs cheer.
Would we had left this dismal spot!
Ill-luck still haunts a fairy grot.
Of such, a wond'rous tale I know—
Dear lady, change that look of wo!
My harp was wont thy grief to cheer."

ELLEN.

'Well, be it as thou wilt; I hear,
But cannot stop the bursting tear."
The minstrel tried his simple art,
But distant far was Ellen's heart.

XII.

BALLAD.

ALICE BRAND.[6]

Merry it is in the good green wood,
When the mavis* and merle† are singing,
When the deer sweeps by, and the hounds are in cry,
And the hunter's horn is ringing.

"O Alice Brand, my native land
Is lost for love of you;
And we must hold by wood and wold,
As outlaws wont to do.

"O Alice, 'twas for all thy locks so bright,
And 'twas all for thine eyes so blue,
That on the night of our luckless flight,
Thy brother bold I slew.

"Now must I teach to hew the beach,
The hand that held the glaive,
For leaves to spread our lowly bed,
And stakes to fence our cave.

"And, for vest of pall, thy fingers small,
That wont on harp to stray,
A cloak must shear from the slaughtered deer,
To keep the cold away."

"O Richard! if my brother died,
'Twas but a fatal chance;
For darkling was the battle tried,
And fortune sped the lance.

"If pall and vair no more I wear,
Nor thou the crimson sheen,
As warm, we'll say, is the russet gray,
As gay the forest green.

"And, Richard, if our lot be hard,
And lost thy native land,
Still Alice has her own Richard,
And he his Alice Brand."—

XIII.

BALLAD CONTINUED.

'Tis merry, 'tis merry in good green wood,
So blith lady Alice is singing;
On the beech's pride, and oak's brown side,
Lord Richard's axe is ringing.

Up spoke the moody elfin king,
Who won'd within the hill,—[7]
Like wind in the porch of a ruined church,
His voice was ghostly shrill.

"Why sounds yon stroke on beach and oak,
Our moonlight circle's screen?
Or who comes here to chase the deer,
Beloved of our elfin queen?[8]
Or who may dare on wold to wear
The fairies' fatal green?[9]

"Up, Urgan, up! to yon mortal hie,
For thou wert christened man;[10]
For cross or sign thou wilt not fly,
For muttered word or ban.

"Lay on him the curse of the withered heart,
The curse of the sleepless eye;
Till he wish and pray that his life would part,
Nor yet find leave to die."

XIV.

BALLAD CONTINUED.

'Tis merry, 'tis merry in good green wood,
Though the birds have stilled their singing;
The evening blaze doth Alice raise,
And Richard is faggots bringing.

Up Urgan starts, that hideous dwarf,
Before lord Richard stands,
And, as he crossed and blessed himself,
"I fear not sign," quoth the grisly elf,
"That is made with bloody hands."—

But out then spoke she, Alice Brand,
That woman void of fear,—
"And if there's blood upon his hand,
'Tis but the blood of deer."—

"Now loud thou liest, thou bold of mood!
It cleaves unto his hand,
The stain of thine own kindly blood,
The blood of Ethert Brand."

Then forward stepped she, Alice Brand,
And made the holy sign,—
"And if there's blood on Richard's hand,
A spotless hand is mine.

* Thrush. † Blackbird.

" And I conjure thee, demon elf,
By him who demons fear,
To show us whence thou art thyself,
And what thine errand here?"—

XV.

BALLAD CONTINUED.

" 'Tis merry, 'tis merry in fairy land,
When fairy birds are singing,
When the court doth ride by their monarch's side,
With bit and bridle ringing:

" And gayly shines the fairy land—
But all is glistening show,[11]
Like the idle gleam that December's beam
Can dart on ice and snow.

" And fading like that varied gleam,
Is our inconstant shape,
Who now like knight and lady seem,
And now like dwarf and ape.

" It was between the night and day,
When the fairy king has power,
That I sunk down in a sinful fray,
And, 'twixt life and death, was snatched away
To the joyless elfin bower.[12]

" But wist I of a woman bold,
Who thrice my brow durst sign,
I might regain my mortal mold,
As fair a form as thine."—

She crossed him once, she crossed him twice—
That lady was so brave;
The fouler grew his goblin hue,
The darker grew the cave.

She crossed him thrice, that lady bold;
He rose beneath her hand
The fairest knight on Scottish mold,
Her brother, Ethert Brand!

Merry it is in good green wood,
When the mavis and merle are singing,
But merrier were they in Dunfermline gray,
When all the bells were ringing.

XVI.

Just as the minstrel sounds were staid,
A stranger climbed the steepy glade;
His martial step, his stately mien,
His hunting suit of Lincoln green,
His eagle glance, remembrance claims—
'Tis Snowdoun's knight, 'tis James Fitz-James.
Ellen beheld as in a dream,
Then, starting, scarce suppressed a scream:
" O stranger! in such hour of fear,
What evil hap has brought thee here?"
" An evil hap! how can it be,
That bids me look again on thee?
By promise bound, my former guide
Met me betimes this morning tide,
And marshalled, over bank and bourne,
The happy path of my return."—
" The happy path!—what! said he nought
Of war, of battle to be fought,
Of guarded pass?"—" No, by my faith!
Nor saw I aught could augur scathe."
" O! haste thee, Allan, to the kern,—
Yonder his tartans I discern;
Learn thou his purpose, and conjure
That he will guide the stranger sure!—
What prompted thee, unhappy man?
The meanest serf in Roderick's clan
Had not been bribed by love or fear,
Unknown to him to guide thee here."—

XVII.

" Sweet Ellen, dear my life must be,
Since it is worthy care from thee;
Yet life I hold but idle breath,
When love or honour's weighed with death.
Then let me profit by my chance,
And speak my purpose bold at once.
I come to bear thee from a wild,
Where ne'er before such blossom smiled;
By this soft hand to lead thee far
From frantic scenes of feud and war.
Near Bochastle my horses wait,
They bear us soon to Stirling gate:
I'll place thee in a lovely bower,
I'll guard thee like a tender flower——"
" Oh, hush, sir knight! 'twere female art
To say I do not read thy heart;
Too much, before, my selfish ear
Was idly soothed my praise to hear.
That fatal bait hath lured thee back,
In deathful hour, o'er dangerous track!
And how, O how, can I atone
The wreck my vanity brought on;—
One way remains—I'll tell him all—
Yes! struggling bosom, forth it shall!
Thou, whose light folly bears the blame,
Buy thine own pardon with thy shame!
But first—my father is a man
Outlawed and exiled, under ban;
The price of blood is on his head,
With me 'twere infamy to wed.—
Still wouldst thou speak?—then hear the truth
Fitz-James, there is a noble youth,—
If yet he is!—exposed for me
And mine to dread extremity—
Thou hast the secret of my heart;
Forgive, be generous, and depart."

XVIII.

Fitz-James knew every wily train
A lady's fickle heart to gain,
But here he knew and felt them vain.
There shot no glance from Ellen's eye,
To give her steadfast speech the lie;
In maiden confidence she stood,
Though mantled in her cheek the blood,
And told her love with such a sigh
Of deep and hopeless agony,
As death had sealed her Malcolm's doom,
And she sat sorrowing on his tomb.
Hope vanished from Fitz-James's eye,
But not with hope fled sympathy.
He proffered to attend her side,
As brother would a sister guide.—
" O! little know'st thou Roderick's heart!
Safer for both we go apart.
O haste thee, and from Allan learn,
If thou may'st trust yon wily kern."—
With hand upon his forehead laid,
The conflict of his mind to shade,
A parting step or two he made;
Then, as some thought had crossed his brain
He paused, and turned, and came again.

XIX.

" Hear, lady, yet, a parting word!—
It chanced in fight that my poor sword
Preserved the life of Scotland's lord.
This ring the grateful monarch gave,
And bade, when I had boon to crave,
To bring it back, and boldly claim
The recompense that I would name.

Ellen, I am no courtly lord,
But one who lives by lance and sword,
Whose castle is his helm and shield,
His lordship the embattled field.
What from a prince can I demand,
Who neither reck of state nor land?
Ellen, thy hand—the ring is thine;
Each guard and usher knows the sign.
Seek thou the king without delay;
This signet shall secure thy way;
And claim thy suit, whate'er it be,
As ransom of his pledge to me."—
He placed the golden circlet on,
Paused—kissed her hand—and then was gone.
The aged minstrel stood aghast,
So hastily Fitz-James shot past.
He joined his guide, and wending down
The ridges of the mountain brown,
Across the stream they took their way,
That joins Lock-Katrine to Achray.

XX.

All in the Trosach's glen was still,
Noontide was sleeping on the hill:
Sudden his guide whooped loud and high—
"Murdoch! was that a signal cry?"
He stammered forth,—"I shout to scare
Yon raven from his dainty fare."
He looked—he knew the raven's prey,
His own brave steed:—"Ah! gallant gray!
For thee—for me, perchance—'twere well
We ne'er had left the Trosach's dell.
Murdoch, move first—but silently;
Whistle or whoop, and thou shalt die."
Jealous and sullen on they fared,
Each silent, each upon his guard.

XXI.

Now wound the path its dizzy ledge
Around a precipice's edge.
When lo! a wasted female form,
Blighted by wrath of sun and storm,
In tattered weeds and wild array,
Stood on a cliff beside the way,
And glancing round her restless eye,
Upon the wood, the rock, the sky,
Seemed nought to mark, yet all to spy.
Her brow was wreathed with gaudy broom;
With gesture wild she waved a plume
Of feathers, which the eagles fling
To crag and cliff from dusky wing;
Such spoils her desperate step had sought,
Where scarce was footing for the goat.
The tartan plaid she first descried,
And shrieked till all the rocks replied;
As loud she laughed when near they drew,
For then the lowland garb she knew;
And then her hands she wildly wrung,
And then she wept, and then she sung.—
She sung:—the voice, in better time,
Perchance to harp or lute might chime;
And now, though strained and roughened, still
Rung wildly sweet to dale and hill.

XXII.

SONG.

"They bid me sleep, they bid me pray,
They say my brain is warped and wrung—
I cannot sleep on highland brae,
I cannot pray in highland tongue.
But were I now where Allan glides,
Or heard my native Devan's tides,
So sweetly would I rest, and pray
That heaven would close my wintry day!

"'Twas thus my hair they bade me braid,
They bade me to the church repair;
It was my bridal morn, they said,
And my true love would meet me there.
But wo betide the cruel guile,
That drowned in blood the morning smile!
And wo betide the fairy dream!
I only waked to sob and scream."

XXIII.

"Who is this maid? what means her lay?
She hovers o'er the hollow way,
And flutters wide her mantle gray,
As the lone heron spreads his wing,
By twilight, o'er a haunted spring."
"'Tis Blanche of Devan," Murdoch said,
"A crazed and captive lowland maid,
Ta'en on the morn she was a bride,
When Roderick forayed Devan side.
The gay bridegroom resistance made,
And felt our chief's unconquered blade.
I marvel she is now at large,
But oft she 'scapes from Maudlin's charge.
Hence, brain-sick fool!"—He raised his bow:
"Now, if thou strikest her but one blow,
I'll pitch thee from the cliff as far
As ever peasant pitched a bar."
"Thanks, champion, thanks!" the maniac cried,
And pressed her to Fitz-James's side.
"See the gray pennons I prepare,
To seek my true-love through the air!
I will not lend that savage groom,
To break his fall, one downy plume!
No!—deep among disjointed stones,
The wolves shall batten on his bones,
And then shall his detested plaid,
By bush and brier in mid air staid,
Wave forth a banner fair and free,
Meet signal for their revelry."

XXIV.

"Hush thee, poor maiden, and be still!"
"O! thou look'st kindly, and I will.
Mine eye has dried and wasted been,
But still it loves the Lincoln green;
And though mine ear is all unstrung,
Still, still it loves the lowland tongue.
"For O, my sweet William was forester true,
He stole poor Blanche's heart away!
His coat it was all of the green wood hue,
And so blithly he trilled the lowland lay!
"It was not that I meant to tell—
But thou art wise, and guessest well."
Then, in a low and broken tone,
And hurried note, the song went on.
Still on the clansman, fearfully,
She fixed her apprehensive eye;
Then turned it on the knight, and then
Her look glanced wildly o'er the glen.

XXV.

"The toils are pitched, and the stakes are set,
Ever sing merrily, merrily;
The bows they bend, and the knives they whet,
Hunters live so cheerily.
"It was a stag, a stag of ten,*
Bearing his branches sturdily;
He came stately down the glen,
Ever sing hardily, hardily.
"It was there he met with a wounded doe,
She was bleeding deathfully;
She warned him of the toils below,
O, so faithfully, faithfully!

* Having ten branches on his antlers.

"He had an eye, and he could heed,
Ever sing warily, warily;
He had a foot, and he could speed—
Hunters watch so narrowly."

XXVI.

Fitz-James's mind was passion-tossed,
When Ellen's hints and fears were lost;
But Murdoch's shout suspicion wrought,
And Blanche's song conviction brought.—
Not like a stag that spies the snare,
But lion of the hunt aware,
He waved at once his blade on high,
"Disclose thy treachery, or die!"—
Forth at full speed the clansman flew,
But in his race his bow he drew.
The shaft just grazed Fitz-James's crest,
And thrilled in Blanche's faded breast.—
Murdoch of Alpine, prove thy speed,
For ne'er had Alpine's son such need!
With heart of fire and foot of wind,
The fierce avenger is behind!
Fate judges of the rapid strife
The forfeit death—the prize is life!
Thy kindred ambush lies before,
Close couched upon the heathery moor;
Them could'st thou reach!—it may not be—
Thine ambushed kin thou ne'er shalt see,
The fiery Saxon gains on thee!
—Resistless speeds the deadly thrust,
As lightning strikes the pine to dust;
With foot and hand Fitz-James must strain,
Ere he can win his blade again.
Bent o'er the fallen, with falcon eye,
He grimly smiled to see him die;
Then slower wended back his way,
Where the poor maiden bleeding lay.

XXVII.

She sate beneath the birchen tree,
Her elbow resting on her knee;
She had withdrawn the fatal shaft,
And gazed on it, and feebly laughed;
Her wreath of broom and feathers gray,
Daggled with blood, beside her lay.
The knight, to stanch the life-stream tried,—
"Stranger, it is in vain!" she cried,
"This hour of death has given me more
Of reason's power than years before;
For, as these ebbing veins decay,
My frenzied visions fade away.
A helpless injured wretch I die,
And something tells me in thine eye,
That thou wert my avenger born.
Seest thou this tress?"—O! still I've worn
This little tress of yellow hair,
Through danger, frenzy, and despair!
It once was bright and clear as thine,
But blood and tears have dimmed its shine.
I will not tell thee when 'twas shred,
Nor from what guiltless victim's head—
My brain would turn!—but it shall wave
Like plumage on thy helmet brave,
Till sun and wind shall bleach the stain,
And thou wilt bring it me again.—
I waver still. O God! more bright
Let reason beam her parting light!
O! by thy knighthood's honoured sign,
And for thy life preserved by mine,
When thou shalt see a darksome man,
Who boasts him chief of Alpine's clan,
With tartans broad and shadowy plume,
And hand of blood, and brow of gloom,
Be thy heart bold, thy weapon strong,
And wreak poor Blanche of Devan's wrong!
They watch for thee by pass and fell—
Avoid the path—O God!—farewell!"

XXVIII.

A kindly heart had brave Fitz-James;
Fast poured his eye at pity's claims,
And now, with mingled grief and ire,
He saw the murdered maid expire.
"God, in my need, be my relief,
As I wreak this on yonder chief!"
A lock from Blanche's tresses fair
He blended with her bridegroom's hair;
The mingled braid in blood he died,
And placed it on his bonnet side:
"By Him whose word is truth! I swear,
No other favour will I wear,
Till this sad token I embrue
In the best blood of Roderick Dhu!
—But hark! what means yon faint halloo?
The chase is up,—but they shall know,
The stag at bay's a dangerous foe."
Barred from the known but guarded way,
Through copse and cliffs Fitz-James must stray,
And oft must change his desperate track,
By stream and precipice turn'd back.
Heartless, fatigued, and faint, at length,
From lack of food and loss of strength,
He couched him in a thicket hoar,
And thought his toils and perils o'er:
"Of all my rash adventures past,
This frantic feat must prove the last!
Who e'er so mad but might have guessed,
That all this highland hornet's nest
Would muster up in swarms so soon
As e'er they heard of bands at Doune?
Like bloodhounds now they search me out,—
Hark, to the whistle and the shout!
If farther through the wilds I go,
I only fall upon the foe;
I'll couch me here till evening gray,
Then darkling try my dangerous way."—

XXIX.

The shades of eve come slowly down,
The woods are wrapped in deeper brown,
The owl awakens from her dell,
The fox is heard upon the fell;
Enough remains of glimmering light,
To guide the wanderer's steps aright,
Yet not enough from far to show
His figure to the watchful foe.
With cautious step, and ear awake,
He climbs the crag, and threads the brake;
And not the summer solstice, there,
Tempered the midnight mountain air,
But every breeze, that swept the wold,
Benumbed his drenched limbs with cold.
In dread, in danger, and alone,
Famished and chilled, through ways unknown,
Tangled and steep, he journeyed on;
Till, as a rock's huge point he turned,
A watch-fire close beside him burned.

XXX.

Beside its embers red and clear,
Basked, in his plaid, a mountaineer;
And up he sprung, with sword in hand,—
"Thy name and purpose! Saxon, stand!"
"A stranger."—"What dost thou require?"
"Rest and a guide, and food and fire.
My life's beset, my path is lost,
The gale has chilled my limbs with frost."

"Art thou a friend to Roderick?"—"No."—
"Thou darest not call thyself a foe?"
"I dare! to him and all the band
He brings to aid his murderous hand."
"Bold words!--but, though the beast of game
The privilege of chase may claim,
Though space and law the stag we lend,
Ere hound we slip, or bow we bend,
Who ever recked where, how, or when,
The prowling fox was trapped and slain?[13]
Thus treacherous scouts,—yet sure they lie,
Who say thou earnest a secret spy!"—
"They do, by heaven!—Come Roderick Dhu,
And of his clan the boldest two,
And let me but till morning rest,
I write the falsehood on their crest."—
"If by the blaze I mark aright,
Thou bearest the belt and spur of knight."
"Then by these tokens may'st thou know
Each proud oppressor's mortal foe."
"Enough, enough; sit down and share
A soldier's couch, a soldier's fare."—

XXXI.

He gave him of his highland cheer,
The hardened flesh of mountain deer;[14]
Dry fuel on the fire he laid,
And bade the Saxon share his plaid.
He tended him like welcome guest,
Then thus his further speech addressed.
"Stranger, I am to Roderick Dhu
A clansman born, a kinsman true;
Each word against his honour spoke
Demands of me avenging stroke;
Yet more,—upon thy fate, 'tis said,
A mighty augury is laid.
It rests with me to wind my horn,—
Thou art with numbers overborne;
It rests with me, here, brand to brand,
Worn as thou art, to bid thee stand:
But, not for clan, nor kindred's cause,
Will I depart from honour's laws;
To assail a wearied man were shame,
And stranger is a holy name;
Guidance and rest, and food and fire,
In vain he never must require.
Then rest thee here till dawn of day;
Myself will guide thee on the way,
O'er stock and stone, through watch and ward,
Till past Clan-Alpine's outmost guard,
As far as Coilantogle's ford;
From thence thy warrant is thy sword."
"I take thy courtesy, by heaven,
As freely as 'tis nobly given!"—
"Well, rest thee; for the bittern's cry
Sings us the lake's wild lullaby."—
With that he shook the gathered heath,
And spread his plaid upon the wreath;
And the brave foemen, side by side,
Lay peaceful down like brothers tried,
And slept until the dawning beam
Purpled the mountain and the stream.

CANTO V.

THE COMBAT.

I.

Fair as the earliest beam of eastern light,
When first, by the bewildered pilgrim spied,
It smiles upon the dreary brow of night,
And silvers o'er the torrent's foaming tide,
And lights the fearful path on mountain side;
Fair as that beam, although the fairest far,
Giving to horror grace, to danger pride,
Shine martial faith, and courtesy's bright star,
Through all the wreckful storms that cloud the brow of war.

II.

That early beam, so fair and sheen,
Was twinkling through the hazel screen,
When, rousing at its glimmer red,
The warriors left their lowly bed,
Looked out upon the dappled sky,
Muttered their soldier matins by,
And then awaked their fire, to steal,
As short and rude, their soldier meal.
That o'er, the Gael* around him threw
His graceful plaid of varied hue,
And, true to promise, led the way,
By thicket green and mountain gray.
A wildering path!—They winded now
Along the precipice's brow,
Commanding the rich scenes beneath,
The windings of the Forth and Teith,
And all the vales between that lie,
Till Stirling's turrets melt in sky;
Then, sunk in copse, their farthest glance
Gained not the length of horseman's lance.
'Twas oft so steep, the foot was fain
Assistance from the hand to gain;
So tangled oft, that, bursting through,
Each hawthorn shed her showers of dew,
That diamond dew, so pure and clear,
It rivals all but beauty's tear!

III.

At length they came where, stern and steep,
The hill sinks down upon the deep.
Here Vennachar in silver flows,
There, ridge on ridge, Benledi rose;
Ever the hollow path twined on,
Beneath steep bank and threatening stone;
An hundred men might hold the post
With hardihood against a host.
The rugged mountain's scanty cloak
Was dwarfish shrubs of birch and oak,
With shingles bare, and cliffs between,
And patches bright of bracken green,
And heather black, that waved so high,
It held the copse in rivalry.
But where the lake slept deep and still,
Dank osiers fringed the swamp and hill;
And oft both path and hill were torn,
Where wintry torrents down had borne,
And heaped upon the cumbered land
Its wreck of gravel, rocks, and sand.
So toilsome was the road to trace,
The guide, abating of his pace,
Led slowly through the pass's jaws,
And asked Fitz-James, by what strange cause
He sought these wilds, traversed by few,
Without a pass from Roderick Dhu.

IV.

"Brave Gael, my pass, in danger tried,
Hangs in my belt, and by my side;
Yet, sooth to tell," the Saxon said,
"I dreamed not now to claim its aid.
When here, but three days since, I came,
Bewildered in pursuit of game,
All seemed as peaceful and as still,
As the mist slumbering on yon hill;
Thy dangerous chief was then afar,
Nor soon expected back from war.

* The Scottish highlander calls himself *Gael*, or Gaul, and terms the lowlanders, *Sassenach*, or Saxons.

Thus said, at least, my mountain guide,
Though deep, perchance, the villain lied."
"Yet why a second venture try?"—
"A warrior thou, and ask me why!
Moves our free course by such fixed cause,
As gives the poor mechanic laws?
Enough, I sought to drive away
The lazy hours of peaceful day;
Slight cause will then suffice to guide
A knight's free footsteps far and wide,—
A falcon flown, a gray-hound strayed,
The merry glance of mountain maid;
Or, if a path be dangerous known,
The danger's self is lure alone."—

V.

"Thy secret keep, I urge thee not;—
Yet, ere again ye sought this spot,
Say, heard ye nought of lowland war,
Against Clan-Alpine, raised by Mar?"
"No, by my word; of bands prepared
To guard king James's sports I heard;
Nor doubt I aught, but, when they hear
This muster of the mountaineer,
Their pennons will abroad be flung,
Which else in Doune had peaceful hung."
"Free be they flung!—for we were loth
Their silken folds should feast the moth.
Free be they flung! as free shall wave
Clan-Alpine's pine in banner brave.
But, stranger, peaceful since you came,
Bewildered in the mountain game,
Whence the bold boast by which you show
Vich-Alpine's vowed and mortal foe?"
"Warrior, but yester-morn I knew
Nought of thy chieftain, Roderick Dhu,
Save as an outlawed desperate man,
The chief of a rebellious clan,
Who, in the regent's court and sight,
With ruffian dagger stabbed a knight:
Yet this alone might from his part
Sever each true and loyal heart."

VI.

Wrothful at such arraignment foul,
Dark loured the clansman's sable scowl.
A space he paused, then sternly said,
"And heard'st thou why he drew his blade?
Heard'st thou that shameful word and blow
Brought Roderick's vengeance on his foe?
What recked the chieftain if he stood
On highland heath, or Holy-Rood?
He rights such wrong where it is given,
If it were in the court of heaven."
"Still was it outrage;—yet 'tis true,
Not then claimed sovereignty his due;
While Albany, with feeble hand,
Held borrowed truncheon of command,[1]
The young king, mewed in Stirling tower,
Was stranger to respect and power.
But then, thy chieftain's robber life!
Winning mean prey by causeless strife,
Wrenching from ruined lowland swain
His herds and harvest reared in vain,—
Methinks a soul, like thine, should scorn
The spoils from such foul foray borne."

VII.

The Gael beheld him grim the while,
And answered with disdainful smile,—
"Saxon, from yonder mountain high,
I marked thee send delighted eye,
Far to the south and east, where lay,
Extended in succession gay,
Deep waving fields and pastures green,
With gentle slopes and groves between;
These fertile plains, that softened vale,
Were once the birthright of the Gael;
The stranger came with iron hand,
And from our fathers reft the land.
Where dwell we now? See, rudely swell
Crag over crag, and fell o'er fell.
Ask we this savage hill we tread,
For fattened steer or household bread;
Ask we for flocks these shingles dry,
And well the mountain might reply,—
'To you, as to your sires of yore,
Belong the target and claymore!
I give you shelter in my breast,
Your own good blades must win the rest.'
Pent in this fortress of the north,
Think'st thou we will not sally forth,
To spoil the spoiler as we may,
And from the robber rend the prey?
Ay, by my soul!—While on yon plain
The Saxon rears one shock of grain;
While, of ten thousand herds, there strays
But one along yon river's maze,
The Gael, of plain and river heir,
Shall, with strong hand, redeem his share.[2]
Where live the mountain chiefs who hold,
That plundering lowland field and fold
Is aught but retribution true?
Seek other cause 'gainst Roderick Dhu."

VIII.

Answered Fitz-James,—"And, if I sought,
Think'st thou no other could be brought?
What deem ye of my path way-laid?
My life given o'er to ambuscade?"
"As of a meed to rashness due;
Hadst thou sent warning fair and true,
I seek my hound, or falcon strayed,
I seek, good faith, a highland maid;
Free hadst thou been to come and go;
But secret path marks secret foe.
Nor yet, for this, e'en as a spy,
Hadst thou, unheard, been doomed to die,
Save to fulfil an augury."
"Well, let it pass; nor will I now
Fresh cause of enmity avow,
To chafe thy mood and cloud thy brow.
Enough, I am by promise tied
To match me with this man of pride:
Twice have I sought Clan-Alpine's glen
In peace; but when I come agen,
I come with banner, brand, and bow,
As leader seeks his mortal foe.
For love-lorn swain in lady's bower,
Ne'er panted for the appointed hour,
As I, until before me stand
This rebel chieftain and his band."

IX.

"Have, then, thy wish!"—he whistled shrill,
And he was answered from the hill;
Wild as the scream of the curlieu,
From crag to crag the signal flew.
Instant, through copse and heath, arose
Bonnets, and spears, and bended bows;
On right, on left, above, below,
Sprung up at once the lurking foe;
From shingles gray their lances start,
The bracken bush sends forth the dart,
The rushes and the willow-wand
Are bristling into axe and brand,
And every tuft of broom gives life
To plaided warrior armed for strife.

That whistle garrisoned the glen
At once with full five hundred men,
As if the yawning hill to heaven
A subterranean host had given.
Watching their leader's beck and will,
All silent there they stood, and still;
Like the loose crags whose threatening mass
Lay tottering o'er the hollow pass,
As if an infant's touch could urge
Their headlong passage down the verge,
With step and weapon forward flung,
Upon the mountain-side they hung.
The mountaineer cast glance of pride
Along Benledi's living side,
Then fixed his eye and sable brow
Full on Fitz-James—"How say'st thou now?
These are Clan-Alpine's warriors true;
And, Saxon,—I am Roderick Dhu!"

X.

Fitz-James was brave:—Though to his heart
The life-blood thrilled with sudden start,
He manned himself with dauntless air,
Returned the chief his haughty stare,
His back against a rock he bore,
And firmly placed his foot before.
"Come one, come all! this rock shall fly
From its firm base as soon as I."
Sir Roderick marked—and in his eyes
Respect was mingled with surprise,
And the stern joy which warriors feel
In foemen worthy of their steel.
Short space he stood—then waved his hand:
Down sunk the disappearing band;
Each warrior vanished where he stood,
In broom or bracken, heath or wood;
Sunk brand and spear and bended bow,
In osiers pale and copses low;
It seemed as if their mother earth
Had swallowed up her warlike birth.
The wind's last breath had tossed in air,
Pennon, and plaid, and plumage fair,—
The next but swept a lone hill side,
Where heath and fern were waving wide;
The sun's last glance was glinted back,
From spear and glaive, from targe and jack,—
The next, all unreflected, shone
On bracken green, and cold gray stone.

XI.

Fitz-James looked round—yet scarce believed
The witness that his sight received;
Such apparition well might seem
Delusion of a dreadful dream.
Sir Roderick in suspense he eyed,
And to his look the chief replied,
"Fear nought—nay, that I need not say—
But doubt not aught from mine array.
Thou art my guest; I pledged my word
As far as Coilantogle ford:
Nor would I call a clansman's brand
For aid against one valiant hand,
Though on our strife lay every vale
Rent by the Saxon from the Gael.
So move we on; I only meant
To show the reed on which you leant,
Deeming this path you might pursue,
Without a pass from Roderick Dhu."[3]
They moved:—I said Fitz-James was brave,
As ever knight that belted glaive;
Yet dare not say, that now his blood
Kept on its wont and tempered flood,
As, following Roderick's stride, he drew
That seeming lonesome pathway through,
Which yet, by fearful proof, was rife
With lances, that, to take his life,
Waited but signal from a guide,
So late dishonoured and defied.
Ever, by stealth, his eye sought round
The vanished guardians of the ground,
And still, from copse and heather deep,
Fancy saw spear and broadsword peep,
And in the plover's shrilly strain,
The signal whistle heard again.
Nor breathed he free till far behind
The pass was left; for then they wind
Along a wide and level green,
Where neither tree nor tuft was seen,
Nor rush, nor bush of broom was near,
To hide a bonnet or a spear.

XII.

The chief in silence strode before,
And reached that torrent's sounding shore,
Which, daughter of three mighty lakes,
From Vennachar in silver breaks,
Sweeps through the plain, and ceaseless mines
On Bochastle the mouldering lines,
Where Rome, the empress of the world,
Of yore her eagle wings unfurled.[4]
And here his course the chieftain staid,
Threw down his target and his plaid,
And to the lowland warrior said:
"Bold Saxon! to his promise just,
Vich-Alpine has discharged his trust.
This murderous chief, this ruthless man,
This head of a rebellious clan,
Hath led thee safe, through watch and ward,
Far past Clan-Alpine's outmost guard.
Now, man to man, and steel to steel,
A chieftain's vengeance thou shalt feel.
See, here, all vantageless I stand,
Armed, like thyself, with single brand;[5]
For this is Coilantogle ford,
And thou must keep thee with thy sword."

XIII.

The Saxon paused:—"I ne'er delayed,
When foeman bade me draw my blade;
Nay more, brave chief, I vowed thy death:
Yet sure thy fair and generous faith,
And my deep debt for life preserved,
A better meed have well deserved:
Can nought but blood our feud atone?
Are there no means?"—"No, stranger, none!
And hear,—to fire thy flagging zeal,
The Saxon cause rests on thy steel;
For thus spoke fate, by prophet bred
Between the living and the dead:—
'Who spills the foremost foeman's life,
His party conquers in the strife.'"
"Then, by my word," the Saxon said,
"The riddle is already read.
Seek yonder brake beneath the cliff,
There lies red Murdoch, stark and stiff.
Thus fate has solved her prophecy,
Then yield to fate, and not to me.
To James, at Stirling, let us go,
When, if thou wilt be still his foe,
Or if the king shall not agree
To grant thee grace and favour free,
I plight mine honour, oath, and word,
That, to thy native strengths restored,
With each advantage shalt thou stand,
That aids thee now to guard thy land."

XIV.

Dark lightning flashed from Roderick's eye—
"Soars thy presumption then so high,
Because a wretched kern ye slew,
Homage to name to Roderick Dhu?
He yields not, he, to man nor fate!
Thou add'st but fuel to my hate:
My clansman's blood demands revenge.—
Not yet prepared?—By heaven, I change
My thought, and hold thy valour light
As that of some vain carpet-knight,
Who ill deserved my courteous care,
And whose best boast is but to wear
A braid of his fair lady's hair."—
"I thank thee, Roderick, for the word!
It nerves my heart, it steels my sword;
For I have sworn, this braid to stain
In the best blood that warms thy vein.
Now, truce, farewell! and, ruth, be gone!—
Yet think not that by thee alone,
Proud chief! can courtesy be shown;
Though not from copse, or heath, or cairn,
Start at my whistle clansmen stern,
Of this small horn one feeble blast
Would fearful odds against thee cast.
But fear not—doubt not—which thou wilt—
We try this quarrel hilt to hilt."—
Then each at once his falchion drew,
Each on the ground his seabbard threw,
Each looked to sun, and stream, and plain,
As what they ne'er might see again;
Then foot, and point, and eye opposed,
In dubious strife they darkly closed.

XV.

Ill fared it then with Roderick Dhu,
That on the field his targe he threw,[6]
Whose brazen studs and tough bull-hide
Had death so often dashed aside;
For, trained abroad his arms to wield,
Fitz-James's blade was sword and shield.[7]
He practised every pass and ward,
To thrust, to strike, to feint, to guard;
While less expert, though stronger far,
The Gael maintained unequal war.
Three times in closing strife they stood,
And thrice the Saxon blade drank blood.
No stinted draught, no scanty tide,
The gushing flood the tartans dyed.
Fierce Roderick felt the fatal drain,
And showered his blows like wintry rain;
And, as firm rock, or castle roof,
Against the winter shower is proof,
The foe, invulnerable still,
Foiled his wild rage by steady skill;
Till, at advantage ta'en, his brand
Forced Roderick's weapon from his hand,
And, backward borne upon the lea,
Brought the proud chieftain to his knee.

XVI.

"Now, yield ye, or, by Him who made
The world, thy heart's blood dyes my blade!"
"Thy threats, thy mercy, I defy!
Let recreant yield, who fears to die."—
Like adder darting from his coil,
Like wolf that dashes through the toil,
Like mountain-cat who guards her young,
Full at Fitz-James's throat he sprung;[8]
Received, but reckoned not of a wound,
And locked his arms his foeman round.—
Now, gallant Saxon, hold thine own!
No maiden's hand is round thee thrown!

That desperate grasp thy frame might feel,
Through bars of brass and triple steel!
They tug, they strain;—down, down, they go,
The Gael above, Fitz-James below.
The chieftain's gripe his throat compressed,
His knee was planted in his breast;
His clotted locks he backward threw,
Across his brow his hand he drew,
From blood and mist to clear his sight,
Then gleamed aloft his dagger bright!—
—But hate and fury ill supplied
The stream of life's exhausted tide,
And all too late the advantage came,
To turn the odds of deadly game;
For while the dagger gleamed on high,
Reeled soul and sense, reeled brain and eye.
Down came the blow; but in the heath
The erring blade found bloodless sheath.
The struggling foe may now unclasp
The fainting chief's relaxing grasp;
Unwounded from the dreadful close,
But breathless all, Fitz-James arose.

XVII.

He faltered thanks to heaven for life,
Redeemed, unhoped, from desperate strife;
Next on his foe his look he cast,
Whose every gasp appeared his last;
In Roderick's gore he dipped the braid,—
"Poor Blanche! thy wrongs are dearly paid;
Yet with thy foe must die, or live,
The praise that faith and valour give."—
With that he blew a bugle note,
Undid the collar from his throat,
Unbonnetted, and by the wave
Sat down, his brow and hands to lave.
Then faint afar are heard the feet
Of rushing steeds in gallop fleet;
The sounds increase, and now are seen
Four mounted squires in Lincoln green;
Two who bear lance, and two who lead,
By loosened rein, a saddled steed;
Each onward held his headlong course,
And by Fitz-James reined up his horse—
With wonder viewed the bloody spot—
—"Exclaim not, gallants! question not,—
You, Herbert and Luffness, alight,
And bind the wounds of yonder knight;
Let the gray palfrey bear his weight,
We destined for a fairer freight,
And bring him on to Stirling straight;
I will before at better speed,
To seek fresh horse and fitting weed.
The sun rides high;—I must be boune
To see the archer-game at noon;
But lightly Bayard clears the lea.—
De Vaux and Herries, follow me.

XVIII.

"Stand, Bayard, stand!"—the steed obeyed,
With arching neck and bended head,
And glancing eye, and quivering ear,
As if he loved his lord to hear.
No foot Fitz-James in stirrup staid,
No grasp upon the saddle laid,
But wreathed his left hand in the mane,
And lightly bounded from the plain,
Turned on the horse his armed heel,
And stirred his courage with the steel.
Bounded the fiery steed in air,
The rider sate erect and fair,
Then, like a bolt from steel cross-bow
Forth lanched, along the plain they go.

They dashed that rapid torrent through,
And up Carhonie's hill they flew;
Still at the gallop pricked the knight,
His merry-men followed as they might.
Along thy banks, swift Teith! they ride,
And in the race they mock thy tide;
Torry and Lendrick now are past,
And Deanstown lies behind them cast;
They rise, the bannered towers of Doune,
They sink in distant woodland soon;
Blair-Drummond sees the hoofs strike fire,
They sweep like breeze through Ochtertyre;
They mark just glance and disappear
The lofty brow of ancient Kier;
They bathe their coursers' sweltering sides,
Dark Forth! amid thy sluggish tides,
And on the opposing shore take ground,
With plash, with scramble, and with bound.
Right hand they leave thy cliffs, Craig-Forth!
And soon the bulwark of the north,
Gray Stirling, with her towers and town,
Upon their fleet career looked down.

XIX.

As up the flinty path they strained,
Sudden his steed the leader reined;
A signal to his squire he flung,
Who instant to his stirrup sprung:
"Seest thou, De Vaux, yon woodsman gray,
Who townward holds the rocky way,
Of stature tall and poor array?
Mark'st thou the firm, yet active stride,
With which he scales the mountain side?
Know'st thou from whence he comes, or whom?"
"No, by my word;—a burley groom
He seems, who in the field or chase
A baron's train would nobly grace."
"Out, out, De Vaux! can fear supply,
And jealousy, no sharper eye?
Afar, ere to the hill he drew,
That stately form and step I knew:
Like form in Scotland is not seen,
Treads not such step on Scottish green.
'Tis James of Douglas, by St. Serle!
The uncle of the banished earl.
Away, away, to court, to show
The near approach of dreaded foe:
The king must stand upon his guard:
Douglas and he must meet prepared."
Then right hand wheeled their steeds, and strait
They won the castle's postern gate.

XX.

The Douglas, who had bent his way
From Cambus-Kenneth's abbey gray,
Now, as he climbed the rocky shelf,
Held sad communion with himself:—
"Yes! all is true my fears could frame:
A prisoner lies the noble Græme,
And fiery Roderick soon will feel
The vengeance of the royal steel.
I, only I, can ward their fate,
God grant the ransom come not late!
The abbess hath her promise given,
My child shall be the bride of heaven:
Be pardoned one repining tear!
For He, who gave her, knows how dear,
How excellent!—but that is by,
And now my business is—to die.
—Ye towers! within whose circuit dread
A Douglas by his sovereign bled,
And thou, O sad and fatal mound!
That oft hast heard the death-axe sound,[9]
As on the noblest of the land
Fell the stern headsman's bloody hand,
The dungeon, block, and nameless tomb
Prepare, for Douglas seeks his doom!
—But hark! what blith and jolly peal
Makes the Franciscan steeple reel?
And see! upon the crowded street,
In motley groups what masquers meet!
Banner and pageant, pipe and drum,
And merry morrice-dancers come.
I guess, by all this quaint array,
The burghers hold their sports to-day.[10]
James will be there; he loves such show,
Where the good yeoman bends his bow,
And the tough wrestler foils his foe,
As well as where, in proud career,
The high-born tilter shivers spear.
I'll follow to the castle-park,
And play my prize: king James shall mark,
If age has tamed these sinews stark,
Whose force so oft, in happier days,
His boyish wonder loved to praise."

XXI.

The castle gates were open flung,
The quivering drawbridge rocked and rung,
And echoed loud the flinty street
Beneath the coursers' clattering feet,
As slowly down the deep descent
Fair Scotland's king and nobles went,
While all along the crowded way
Was jubilee and loud huzza.
And ever James was bending low,
To his white jennet's saddle bow,
Doffing his cap to city dame,
Who smiled and blushed for pride and shame.
And well the simperer might be vain,—
He chose the fairest of the train.
Gravely he greets each city sire,
Commends each pageant's quaint attire,
Gives to the dancers thanks aloud,
And smiles and nods upon the crowd,
Who rend the heavens with their acclaims,
"Long live the commons' king, king James!"
Behind the king thronged peer and knight,
And noble dame and damsel bright,
Whose fiery steeds ill brooked the stay
Of the steep street and crowded way.
But in the train you might discern
Dark lowering brow and visage stern;
There nobles mourned their pride restrained,
And the mean burghers' joys disdained;
And chiefs, who, hostage for their clan,
Were each from home a banished man,
There thought upon their own gray tower,
Their waving woods, their feudal power,
And deemed themselves a shameful part
Of pageant which they cursed in heart.

XXII.

Now, in the castle-park, drew out
Their chequered bands the joyous rout.
There morricers, with bell at heel,
And blade in hand, their mazes wheel;
But chief, beside the butts, there stand
Bold Robin Hood[11] and all his band,—
Friar Tuck, with quarter-staff and cowl,
Old Scathelocke, with his surly scowl,
Maid Marion, fair as ivory bone,
Scarlet, and Mutch, and Little John;
Their bugles challenge all that will,
In archery to prove their skill.

The Douglas bent a bow of might,
His first shaft centered in the white,
And when in turn he shot again,
His second split the first in twain.
From the king's hand must Douglas take
A silver dart, the archer's stake;
Fondly he watched, with watery eye,
Some answering glance of sympathy,—
No kind emotion made reply!
Indifferent as to archer wight,
The monarch gave the arrow bright.[12]

XXIII.

Now, clear the ring! for, hand to hand,
The manly wrestlers take their stand.
Two o'er the rest superior rose,
And proud demanded mightier foes,
Nor called in vain; for Douglas came.
—For life is Hugh of Larbert lame;
Scarce better John of Alloa's fare,
Whom senseless home his comrades bear.
Prize of the wrestling match, the king
To Douglas gave a golden ring,[13]
While coldly glanced his eye of blue,
As frozen drop of wintry dew.
Douglas would speak, but in his breast
His struggling soul his words suppressed:
Indignant then he turned him where
Their arms the brawny yeomen bare,
To hurl the massive bar in air.
When each his utmost strength had shown,
The Douglas rent an earth-fast stone
From its deep bed, then heaved it high,
And sent the fragment through the sky,
A rood beyond the farthest mark;—
And still in Stirling's royal park,
The gray-haired sires, who know the past,
To strangers point the Douglas-cast,
And moralize on the decay
Of Scottish strength in modern day.

XXIV.

The vale with loud applauses rang,
The Ladies' Rock sent back the clang.
The king, with look unmoved, bestowed
A purse well filled with pieces broad.
Indignant smiled the Douglas proud,
And threw the gold among the crowd,
Who now, with anxious wonder, scan,
And sharper glance, the dark gray man;
Till whispers rose among the throng,
That heart so free, and hand so strong,
Must to the Douglas' blood belong:
The old men marked, and shook the head,
To see his hair with silver spread,
And winked aside, and told each son
Of feats upon the English done,
Ere Douglas of the stalwart hand
Was exiled from his native land.
The women praised his stately form,
Though wrecked by many a winter's storm;
The youth with awe and wonder saw
His strength surpassing nature's law.
Thus judged, as is their wont, the crowd,
Till murmur rose to clamours loud.
But not a glance from that proud ring
Of peers who circled round the king,
With Douglas held communion kind,
Or called the banished man to mind;
No, not from those who, at the chase,
Once held his side the honoured place,
Begirt his board, and, in the field,
Found safety underneath his shield:
For he whom royal eyes disown,
When was his form to courtiers known?

XXV.

The monarch saw the gambols flag,
And bade let loose a gallant stag,
Whose pride, the holiday to crown,
Two favourite greyhounds should pull down,
That venison free, and Bourdeaux wine
Might serve the archery to dine.
But Lufra,—whom from Douglas' side,
Nor bribe nor threat could e'er divide,
The fleetest hound in all the north,—
Brave Lufra saw, and darted forth.
She left the royal hounds mid way,
And, dashing on the antlered prey,
Sunk her sharp muzzle in his flank,
And deep the flowing life-blood drank.
The king's stout huntsman saw the sport
By strange intruder broken short,
Came up, and, with his leash unbound,
In anger struck the noble hound.
—The Douglas had endured, that morn,
The king's cold look, the nobles' scorn,
And last, and worst to spirit proud,
Had borne the pity of the crowd;
But Lufra had been fondly bred
To share his board, to watch his bed,
And oft would Ellen, Lufra's neck,
In maiden glee, with garlands deck;
They were such play-mates, that with name
Of Lufra, Ellen's image came.
His stifled wrath is brimming high,
In darkened brow and flashing eye;
As waves before the bark divide,
The crowd gave way before his stride;
Needs but a buffet and no more,
The groom lies senseless in his gore.
Such blow no other hand could deal,
Though gauntleted in glove of steel.

XXVI.

Then clamoured loud the royal train,
And brandished swords and staves amain.
But stern the baron's warning—"Back!
Back, on your lives, ye menial pack!
Beware the Douglas!—Yes, behold,
King James! the Douglas, doomed of old,
And vainly sought for near and far,
A victim to atone the war:
A willing victim now attends,
Nor craves thy grace but for his friends."
—"Thus is my clemency repaid?
Presumptuous lord!" the monarch said;
"Of thy mis-proud ambitious clan,
Thou, James of Bothwell, wert the man,
The only man in whom a foe
My woman-mercy would not know;
But shall a monarch's presence brook
Injurious blow, and haughty look?
What ho! the captain of our guard!
Give the offender fitting ward.
Break off the sports!—"for tumult rose,
And yeomen 'gan to bend their bows,—
"Break off the sports!"—he said, and frowned,
"And bid our horsemen clear the ground."

XXVII.

Then uproar wild and misarray
Marred the fair form of festal day.
The horsemen pricked among the crowd,
Repelled by threats and insult loud;
To earth are borne the old and weak,
The timorous fly, the women shriek;

With flint, with shaft, with staff, with bar,
The hardier urge tumultuous war.
At once round Douglas darkly sweep
The royal spears in circle deep,
And slowly scale the pathway steep;
While on the rear in thunder pour
The rabble with disordered roar.
With grief the noble Douglas saw
The commons rise against the law,
And to the leading soldier said,
"Sir John of Hyndford! 'twas my blade
That knighthood on thy shoulder laid;
For that good deed permit me, then,
A word with these misguided men.

XXVIII.

"Hear, gentle friends! ere yet for me
Ye break the bands of fealty.
My life, my honour, and my cause,
I tender free to Scotland's laws;
Are these so weak as must require
The aid of your misguided ire?
Or, if I suffer causeless wrong,
Is then my selfish rage so strong,
My sense of public weal so low,
That, for mean vengeance on a foe,
Those chords of love I should unbind
Which knit my country and my kind?
Oh no! believe, in yonder tower
It will not sooth my captive hour,
To know those spears our foes should dread,
For me in kindred gore are red.
To know, in fratricide brawl begun
For me, that mother wails her son;
For me, that widow's mate expires;
For me, that orphans weep their sires,
That patriots mourn insulted laws,
And curse the Douglas for the cause.
O! let your patience ward such ill,
And keep your right to love me still!"

XXIX.

The crowd's wild fury sunk again
In tears, as tempests melt in rain.
With lifted hands and eyes, they prayed
For blessings on his generous head,
Who for his country felt alone,
And prized her blood beyond his own.
Old men, upon the verge of life,
Blessed him who stayed the civil strife;
And mothers held their babes on high,
The self-devoted chief to spy,
Triumphant over wrong and ire,
To whom the prattlers owed a sire:
E'en the rough soldier's heart was moved:
As if behind some bier beloved,
With trailing arms and drooping head,
The Douglas up the hill he led,
And at the castle's battled verge,
With sighs resigned his honoured charge.

XXX.

The offended monarch rode apart,
With bitter thought and swelling heart,
And would not now vouchsafe again
Through Stirling's streets to lead his train.
"O Lennox, who would wish to rule
This changeling crowd, this common fool?
Hear'st thou," he said, "the loud acclaim,
With which they shout the Douglas name?
With like acclaim the vulgar throat
Strained for king James their morning note:
With like acclaim they hailed the day
When first I broke the Douglas' way;
And like acclaim would Douglas greet,
If he could hurl me from my seat.
Who o'er the herd would wish to reign,
Fantastic, fickle, fierce, and vain?
Vain as the leaf upon the stream,
And fickle as a changeful dream;
Fantastic as a woman's mood,
And fierce as frenzy's fevered blood.
Thou many-headed monster thing,
O! who would wish to be thy king!--

XXXI.

"But soft! what messenger of speed
Spurs hitherward his panting steed?
I guess his cognizance afar—
What from our cousin, John of Mar?"—
"He prays, my liege, your sports keep bound
Within the safe and guarded ground:
For some foul purpose yet unknown,—
Most sure for evil to the throne,—
The outlawed chieftain, Roderick Dhu,
Has summoned his rebellious crew;
'Tis said, in James of Bothwell's aid
These loose banditti stand arrayed.
The earl of Mar, this morn, from Doune,
To break their muster marched, and soon
Your grace will hear of battle fought;
But earnestly the earl besought,
Till for such danger he provide,
With scanty train you will not ride."—

XXXII.

"Thou warn'st me I have done amiss,—
I should have earlier looked to this;
I lost it in this bustling day.
--Retrace with speed thy former way;
Spare not for spoiling of thy steed,
The best of mine shall be thy meed.
Say to our faithful lord of Mar,
We do forbid the intended war;
Roderick, this morn, in single fight,
Was made our prisoner by a knight;
And Douglas hath himself and cause
Submitted to our kingdom's laws.
The tidings of their leaders lost
Will soon dissolve the mountain host,
Nor would we that the vulgar feel,
For their chiefs' crimes, avenging steel.
Bear Mar our message, Braco; fly!"—
He turned his steed,—"My liege, I hie,
Yet, ere I cross this lily lawn,
I fear the broad-swords will be drawn."
The turf the flying courser spurned,
And to his towers the king returned.

XXXIII.

Ill with king James's mood that day,
Suited gay feast and minstrel lay;
Soon were dismissed the courtly throng,
And soon cut short the festal song.
Nor less upon the saddened town,
The evening sunk in sorrow down.
The burghers spoke of civil jar,
Of rumoured feuds and mountain war,
Of Moray, Mar, and Roderick Dhu,
All up in arms;—the Douglas too,
They moraed him pent within the hold,
"Where stout earl William was of old,"*—
And there his word the speaker staid,
And finger on his lip he laid,
Or pointed to his dagger blade.
But jaded horsemen, from the west,
At evening to the castle pressed;

* Stabbed by James II, in Stirling castle.

And busy talkers said they bore
Tidings of fight on Katrine's shore;
At noon the deadly fray begun,
And lasted till the set of sun.
Thus giddy rumour shook the town,
Till closed the night her pennons brown.

CANTO VI.

THE GUARD-ROOM.

I.

The sun awakening, through the smoky air
Of the dark city, casts a sullen glance,
Rousing each caitiff to his task of care,
Of sinful man the sad inheritance;
Summoning revellers from the lagging dance,
And scaring prowling robber to his den;
Gilding on battled tower the warder's lance,
And warning student pale to leave his pen,
And yield his drowsy eyes to the kind nurse of men.

What various scenes, and, O! what scenes of wo,
Are witnessed by that red and struggling beam!
The fevered patient, from his pallet low,
Through crowded hospitals beholds its stream;
The ruined maiden trembles at its gleam,
The debtor wakes to thoughts of gyve and jail;
The love-lorn wretch starts from tormenting dream;
The wakeful mother, by the glimmering pale,
Trims her sick infant's couch, and soothes his feeble wail.

II.

At dawn the towers of Stirling rang
With soldier step and weapon clang,
While drums, with rolling note, foretell
Relief to weary sentinel,
Through narrow loop and casement barred
The sunbeams sought the court of guard,
And, struggling with the smoky air,
Deadened the torch's yellow glare.
In comfortless alliance shone
The lights through arch of blackened stone,
And showed wild shapes in garb of war,
Faces deformed with beard and scar,
All haggard from the midnight watch,
And fevered with the stern debauch;
For the oak table's massive board,
Flooded with wine, with fragments stored,
And beakers drained, and cups o'erthrown,
Showed in what sport the night had flown.
Some, weary, snored on floor and bench:
Some laboured still their thirst to quench;
Some, chilled with watching, spread their hands
O'er the huge chimney's dying brands,
While round them, or beside them flung,
At every step their harness rung.

III.

These drew not for their fields the sword,
Like tenants of a feudal lord,
Nor owned the patriarchal claim
Of chieftain in their leader's name;
Adventurers they,[1] from far who roved,
To live by battle which they loved.
There the Italian's clouded face,
The swarthy Spaniard's there you trace;
The mountain-loving Switzer there
More freely breathed in mountain-air;
The Fleming there despised the soil,
That paid so ill the labourer's toil;
The rolls showed French and German name,
And merry England's exiles came,
To share, with ill-concealed disdain,
Of Scotland's pay the scanty gain.
All brave in arms, well trained to wield
The heavy halbert, brand, and shield;
In camps licentious, wild, and bold;
In pillage, fierce and uncontrolled;
And now, by holy tide and feast,
From rules of discipline released.

IV.

They held debate of bloody fray,
Fought 'twixt Loch-Katrine and Achray.
Fierce was their speech, and, 'mid their words,
Their hands oft grappled to their swords;
Nor sunk their tone to spare the ear
Of wounded comrades groaning near,
Whose mangled limbs, and bodies gored,
Bore token of the mountain sword,
Though neighbouring to the court of guard,
Their prayers and feverish wails were heard:
Sad burden to the ruffian joke,
And savage oath by fury spoke!—
At length up started John of Brent,
A yeoman from the banks of Trent;
A stranger to respect or fear,
In peace a chaser of the deer,
In host a hardy mutineer,
But still the boldest of the crew,
When deed of danger was to do.
He grieved, that day, their games cut short,
And marred the dicer's brawling sport,
And shouted loud, "Renew the bowl!
And, while a merry catch I troll,
Let each the buxom chorus bear,
Like brethren of the brand and spear."

V.

SOLDIER'S SONG.

Our vicar still preachers that Peter and Poule
Laid a swinging long curse on the bonny brown bowl,
That there's wrath and despair in the jolly black jack,
And the seven deadly sins in a flagon of sack;
Yet whoop, Barnaby! off with the liquor,
Drink upsees* out, and a fig for the vicar!

Our vicar he calls it damnation to sip
The ripe ruddy dew of a woman's dear lip,
Says that Beelzebub lurks in her kerchief so sly,
And Apollyon shoots darts from her merry black eye;
Yet whoop, Jack! kiss Gillian the quicker,
Till she bloom like a rose, and a fig for the vicar!

Our vicar thus preaches—and why should he not?
For the dues of his cure are the placket and pot;
And 'tis right of his office poor laymen to lurch,
Who infringe the domains of our good mother church.
Yet whoop, bully-boys! off with your liquor,
Sweet Marjorie's the word, and a fig for the vicar!

VI.

The warder's challenge, heard without,
Staid in mid roar the merry shout.
A soldier to the portal went,—
"Here is old Bertram, sirs, of Ghent;
And, beat for jubilee the drum!
A maid and minstrel with him come."
Bertram, a Fleming, gray and scarred,
Was entering now the court of guard,
A harper with him, and in plaid
All muffled close, a mountain maid,

*A Bacchanalian interjection, borrowed from the Dutch.

Who backward shrunk to 'scape the view
Of the loose scene and boisterous crew.
"What news?" they roared:—"I only know,
From noon till eve we fought with foe,
As wild and as untameable
As the rude mountains where they dwell.
On both sides store of blood is lost,
Nor much success can either boast."
"But whence thy captives, friend? such spoil
As theirs must needs reward thy toil.
Old dost thou wax, and wars grow sharp;
Thou now hast glee-maiden and harp!
Get thee an ape, and trudge the land,
The leader of a juggler band."—[2]

VII.

"No, comrade; no such fortune mine.
After the fight, these sought our line,
That aged harper and the girl,
And, having audience of the earl,
Mar bade I should purvey them steed,
And bring them hitherward with speed.
Forbear your mirth and rude alarm,
For none shall do them shame or harm."
"Hear ye his boast?" cried John of Brent,
Ever to strife and jangling bent;
"Shall he strike doe beside our lodge,
And yet the jealous niggard grudge
To pay the forester his fee!
I'll have my share howe'er it be,
Despite of Moray, Mar, or thee."
Bertram his forward step withstood;
And, burning in his vengeful mood,
Old Allan, though unfit for strife,
Laid hand upon his dagger-knife;
But Ellen boldly stepped between,
And dropped at once the tartan screen:
So, from his morning cloud, appears
The sun of May, through summer tears.
The savage soldiery amazed,
As on descended angel gazed;
E'en hardy Brent, abashed and tamed,
Stood half admiring, half ashamed.

VIII.

Boldly she spoke:—"Soldiers, attend!
My father was the soldier's friend;
Cheered him in camps, in marches led,
And with him in the battle bled.
Not from the valiant, or the strong,
Should exile's daughter suffer wrong."
Answered De Brent, most forward still
In every feat, or good or ill,—
"I shame me of the part I played:
And thou an outlaw's child, poor maid!
An outlaw I by forest laws,
And merry Needwood knows the cause.
Poor Rose,—if Rose be living now,"
He wiped his iron eye and brow,
"Must bear such age, I think, as thou.
Hear ye, my mates,—I go to call
The captain of our watch to hall;
There lies my halbert on the floor;
And he that steps my halbert o'er,
To do the maid injurious part,
My shaft shall quiver in his heart!
Beware loose speech, or jesting rough:
Ye all know John De Brent. Enough."

IX.

Their captain came, a gallant young—
(Of Tullibardine's house he sprung,)
Nor wore he yet the spurs of knight;
Gay was his mien, his humour light,
And, though by courtesy controlled,
Forward his speech, his bearing bold,
The high-born maiden ill could brook
The scanning of his curious look,
And dauntless eye;—and yet, in sooth,
Young Lewis was a generous youth;
But Ellen's lovely face and mien,
Ill-suited to the garb and scene,
Might lightly bear construction strange,
And give loose fancy scope to range.
"Welcome to Stirling towers, fair maid!
Come ye to seek a champion's aid,
On palfrey white, with harper hoar,
Like arrant damosel of yore?
Does thy high quest a knight require,
Or may the venture suit a squire?"
Her dark eye flashed;—she paused and sighed,
"O what have I to do with pride!
Through scenes of sorrow, shame, and strife,
A suppliant for a father's life,
I crave an audience of the king.
Behold, to back my suit, a ring,
The royal pledge of grateful claims,
Given by the monarch to Fitz-James."—

X.

The signet ring young Lewis took,
With deep respect and altered look;
And said,—"This ring our duties own;
And, pardon, if to worth unknown,
In semblance mean obscurely veiled,
Lady, in aught my folly failed.
Soon as the day flings wide his gates,
The king shall know what suitor waits.
Please you, meanwhile, in fitting bower
Repose you till his waking hour;
Female attendance shall obey
Your best for service or array.
Permit I marshal you the way."
But, ere she followed, with the grace
And open bounty of her race,
She bade her slender purse be shared
Among the soldiers of the guard.
The rest with thanks their guerdon took;
But Brent, with shy and awkward look,
On the reluctant maiden's hold
Forced bluntly back the proffered gold;—
"Forgive a haughty English heart,
And O forget its ruder part;
The vacant purse shall be my share,
Which in my barret cap I'll bear,
Perchance, in jeopardy of war,
Where gayer crests may keep afar."
With thanks,—'twas all she could,—the maid
His rugged courtesy repaid.

XI.

When Ellen forth with Lewis went,
Allan made suit to John of Brent:
"My lady safe, O let your grace
Give me to see my master's face!
His minstrel I,—to share his doom
Bound from the cradle to the tomb.
Tenth in descent, since first my sires
Waked for his noble house their lyres,
Nor one of all the race was known
But prized its weal above their own.
With the chief's birth begins our care;
Our harp must sooth the infant heir,
Teach the youth tales of fight, and grace
His earliest feat of field or chase;
In peace, in war, our rank we keep,
We cheer his board, we sooth his sleep,

Nor leave him till we pour our verse,
A doleful tribute! o'er his hearse.
Then let me share his captive lot;
It is my right—deny it not!"—
"Little we reck," said John of Brent,
"We southern men, of long descent;
Nor wot we how a name—a word—
Makes clansmen vassals to a lord:
Yet kind my noble landlord's part,
God bless the house of Beaudesert!
And, but I loved to drive the deer,
More than to guide the labouring steer,
I had not dwelt an outcast here.
Come, good old minstrel, follow me;
Thy lord and chieftain shalt thou see."

XII.

Then, from a rusted iron hook,
A bunch of ponderous keys he took,
Lighted a torch, and Allan led
Through grated arch and passage dread.
Portals they passed, where, deep within,
Spoke prisoner's moan, and fetters' din;
Through rugged vaults, where, loosely stored,
Lay wheel, and axe, and headsman's sword,
And many a hideous engine grim,
For wrenching joint, and crushing limb,
By artists formed, who deemed it shame
And sin to give their work a name.
They halted at a low browed porch,
And Brent to Allan gave the torch,
While bolt and chain he backward rolled,
And made the bar unhasp its hold.
They entered:—'twas a prison room
Of stern security and gloom,
Yet not a dungeon; for the day
Through lofty gratings found its way,
And rude and antique garniture
Decked the sad walls and oaken floor;
Such as the rugged days of old
Deemed fit for captive noble's hold.
"Here," said De Brent, "thou mayst remain
Till the leach visit him again.
Strict is his charge, the warders tell,
To tend the noble prisoner well."
Retiring then, the bolt he drew,
And the lock's murmurs growled anew.
Roused at the sound, from lowly bed
A captive feebly raised his head;
The wondering minstrel looked, and knew—
Not his dear lord, but Roderick Dhu!
For, come from where Clan-Alpine fought,
They, erring, deemed the chief he sought.

XIII.

As the tall ship, whose lofty prore
Shall never stem the billows more,
Deserted by her gallant band,
Amid the breakers lies astrand—
So, on his couch, lay Roderick Dhu!
And oft his fevered limbs he threw
In toss abrupt, as when her sides
Lie rocking in the advancing tides,
That shake her frame to ceaseless beat,
Yet cannot heave her from her seat;
O! how unlike her course at sea!
Or his free step on hill and lea!
Soon as the minstrel he could scan,
—"What of thy lady? of my clan?
My mother?—Douglas?—tell me all!
Have they been ruined in my fall?
Ah, yes! or wherefore art thou here?
Yet speak—speak boldly—do not fear."
(For Allan, who his mood well knew,
Was choaked with grief and terror too.)
"Who fought—who fled?—Old man, be brief;
Some might—for they had lost their chief.
Who basely live?—who bravely died?"
"O, calm thee, chief!" the minstrel cried,
"Ellen is safe;"—"For that, thank heaven!"
"And hopes are for the Douglas given;
The lady Margaret too is well,
And, for thy clan—on field or fell,
Has never harp of minstrel told,
Of combat fought so true and bold.
Thy stately pine is yet unbent,
Though many a goodly bow is rent."

XIV.

The chieftain reared his form on high,
And fever's fire was in his eye;
But ghastly, pale, and livid streaks
Chequered his swarthy brow and cheeks.
—"Hark, minstrel! I have heard thee play,
With measure bold, on festal day,
In yon lone isle—again where ne'er
Shall harper play, or warrior hear!
That stirring air that deals on high,
O'er Dermid's race our victory.
Strike it![3]—and then (for well thou canst)
Free from thy minstrel spirit-glanced,
Fling me the picture of the fight,
When met my clan the Saxon might.
I'll listen, till my fancy hears
The clang of swords, the crash of spears!
These grates, these walls, shall vanish then,
For the fair field of fighting men,
And my free spirit burst away,
As if it soared from battle fray."
The trembling bard with awe obeyed,—
Slow on the harp his hand he laid;
But soon remembrance of the sight
He witnessed from the mountain's height,
With what old Bertram told at night,
Awakened the full power of song,
And bore him in career along;
As shallop launched on river's tide,
That slow and fearful leaves the side,
But, when it feels the middle stream,
Drives downward swift as lightning's beam

XV.

BATTLE OF BEAL' AN DUINE.[4]

"The minstrel came once more to view
The eastern ridge of Ben-venue,
For, ere he parted, he would say
Farewell to lovely Loch-Achray—
Where shall he find, in foreign land,
So lone a lake, so sweet a strand!
There is no breeze upon the fern,
No ripple on the lake,
Upon her eyrie nods the erne,
The deer has sought the brake;
The small birds will not sing aloud,
The springing trout lies still,
So darkly glooms yon thunder cloud,
That swathes, as with a purple shroud,
Benledi's distant hill.
Is it the thunder's solemn sound
That mutters deep and dread,
Or echoes from the groaning ground
The warrior's measured tread?
Is it the lightning's quivering glance
That on the thicket streams,
Or do they flash on spear and lance
The sun's retiring beams?

I see the dagger-crest of Mar,
I see the Moray's silver star
Wave o'er the cloud of Saxon war,
That up the lake comes winding far!
To hero boune for battle strife,
Or bard of martial lay,
'Twere worth ten years of peaceful life,
One glance at their array!

XVI.

"Their light armed archers far and near
Surveyed the tangled ground,
Their centre ranks, with pike and spear,
A twilight forest frowned,
Their barbed horsemen, in the rear,
The stern battâlia crowned.
No cymbal clashed, no clarion rang,
Still were the pipe and drum;
Save heavy tread, and armour's clang,
The sullen march was dumb.
There breathed no wind their crests to shake,
Or wave their flags abroad;
Scarce the frail aspen seemed to quake,
That shadowed o'er their road.
Their va'ward scouts no tidings bring,
Can rouse no lurking foe,
Nor spy a trace of living thing,
Save when they stirred the roe;
The host moves like a deep-sea wave,
Where rise no rocks its pride to brave,
High swelling, dark, and slow.
The lake is passed, and now they gain
A narrow and a broken plain,
Before the Trosach's rugged jaws;
And here the horse and spearmen pause,
While, to explore the dangerous glen,
Dive through the pass the archer-men.

XVII.

"At once there rose so wild a yell
Within that dark and narrow dell,
As all the fiends, from heaven that fell,
Had pealed the banner-cry of hell!
Forth from the pass in tumult driven,
Like chaff before the wind of heaven,
The archery appear:
For life! for life! their flight they ply—
And shriek, and shout, and battle-cry,
And plaids and bonnets waving high,
And broad-swords flashing to the sky,
Are maddening in the rear.
Onward they drive, in dreadful race,
Pursuers and pursued;
Before that tide of flight and chase,
How shall it keep its rooted place,
The spearmen's twilight wood?
—'Down, down,' cried Mar, 'your lances down!
Bear back both friend and foe!'
Like reeds before the tempest's frown,
That serried grove of lances brown
At once lay levelled low;
And closely shouldering side to side,
The bristling ranks the onset bide.—
—'We'll quell the savage mountaineer,
As their Tinchel* cows the game!
They come as fleet as forest deer,
We'll drive them back as tame.'—

XVIII.

"Bearing before them, in their course,
The relics of the archer force,
Like wave with crest of sparkling foam,
Right onward did Clan-Alpine come.
Above the tide, each broadsword bright
Was brandishing like beam of light,
Each targe was dark below;
And with the ocean's mighty swing,
When heaving to the tempest's wing,
They hurled them on the foe.
I heard the lance's shivering crash,
As when the whirlwind rends the ash;
I heard the broadsword's deadly clang,
As if an hundred anvils rang!
But Moray wheeled his rear-ward rank
Of horsemen on Clan-Alpine's flank—
—'My banner-man, advance!
I see,' he cried, 'their columns shake.—
Now, gallants! for your ladies' sake,
Upon them with the lance!'
The horsemen dashed among the rout,
As deer break through the broom;
Their steeds are stout, their swords are out,
They soon make lightsome room.
Clan-Alpine's best are backward borne—
Where, where was Roderick then!
One blast upon his bugle-horn
Were worth a thousand men.
And refluent through the pass of fear
The battle's tide was poured;
Vanished the Saxon's struggling spear,
Vanished the mountain sword.
As Bracklinn's chasm, so black and steep,
Receives her roaring linn,
As the dark caverns of the deep
Suck the wild whirlpool in,
So did the deep and darksome pass
Devour the battle's mingled mass;
None linger now upon the plain,
Save those who ne'er shall fight again.

XIX.

"Now westward rolls the battle's din,
That deep and doubling pass within.
—Minstrel, away! the work of fate
Is bearing on: its issue wait,
Where the rude Trosach's dread defile
Opens on Katrine's lake and isle.
Gray Ben-venue I soon repassed,
Loch-Katrine lay beneath me cast.
The sun is set;—the clouds are met,
The lowering scowl of heaven
An inky hue of livid blue
To the deep lake has given;
Strange gusts of wind from mountain glen
Swept o'er the lake, then sunk agen.
I heeded not the eddying surge,
Mine eye but saw the Trosach's gorge,
Mine ear but heard the sullen sound,
Which like an earthquake shook the ground,
And spoke the stern and desperate strife,
That parts not but with parting life,
Seeming, to minstrel-ear, to toll
The dirge of many a passing soul.
Nearer it comes—the dim-wood glen
The martial flood disgorged agen,
But not in mingled tide;
The plaided warriors of the north,
High on the mountain thunder forth,
And overhang its side;
While by the lake below appears
The darkening cloud of Saxon spears.
At weary bay each shattered band,
Eyeing their foemen, sternly stand;

* A circle of sportsmen, who, by surrounding a great space, and gradually narrowing, brought immense quantities of deer together, which usually made desperate efforts to break through the *Tinchel*.

Their banners stream like tattered sail,
That flings its fragments to the gale,
And broken arms and disarray
Marked the fell havoc of the day.

XX.

"Viewing the mountain's ridge askance,
The Saxons stood in sullen trance,
Till Moray pointed with his lance,
And cried—'Behold yon isle!—
See! none are left to guard its strand,
But women weak, that ring the hand:
'Tis there of yore the robber band
Their booty wont to pile;
My purse, with bonnet-pieces store,
To him will swim a how-shot o'er,
And loose a shallop from the shore.
Lightly we'll tame the war-wolf then,
Lords of his mate, and brood, and den.'—
Forth from the ranks a spearman sprung,
On earth his casque and corslet rung,
He plunged him in the wave:—
All saw the deed—the purpose knew,
And to their clamours Ben-venue
A mingled echo gave:
The Saxons shout, their mate to cheer,
The helpless females scream for fear,
And yells for rage the mountaineer.
'Twas then, as by the outcry riven,
Poured down at once the louring heaven;
A whirlwind swept Loch-Katrine's breast,
Her billows reared their snowy crest,
Well for the swimmer swelled they high,
To mar the highland marksman's eye;
For round him showered, 'mid rain and hail,
The vengeful arrows of the Gael.
In vain.—He nears the isle—and lo!
His hand is on a shallop's bow.
—Just then a flash of lightning came,
It tinged the waves and strand with flame;
I marked Duncraggan's widowed dame,
Behind an oak I saw her stand,
A naked dirk gleamed in her hand:
It darkened—but amid the moan
Of waves I heard a dying groan;—
Another flash!—the spearman floats
A weltering corse beside the boats,
And the stern matron o'er him stood,
Her hand and dagger streaming blood.

XXI.

"'Revenge! revenge!' the Saxons cried,
The Gaels' exulting shout replied.
Despite the elemental rage,
Again they hurried to engage;
But, ere they closed in desperate fight,
Bloody with spurring came a knight,
Sprung from his horse, and, from a crag,
Waved 'twixt the hosts a milk-white flag.
Clarion and trumpet by his side
Rung forth a truce-note high and wide;
While, in the monarch's name, afar
An herald's voice forbade the war,
For Bothwell's lord, and Roderick bold,
Were both, he said, in captive hold."—
But here the lay made sudden stand,
The harp escaped the minstrel's hand!
Oft had he stolen a glance, to spy
How Roderick brooked his minstrelsy:
At first, the chieftain, to the chime,
With lifted hand, kept feeble time;
That motion ceased,—yet feeling strong
Varied his look as changed the song;
At length no more his deafened ear
The minstrel melody can hear:
His face grows sharp, his hands are clenched,
As if some pang his heart-strings wrenched;
Set are his teeth, his fading eye
Is sternly fixed on vacancy;
Thus, motionless, and moanless, drew
His parting breath, stout Roderick Dhu!
Old Allan-bane looked on aghast,
While grim and still his spirit passed;
But when he saw that life was fled,
He poured his wailing o'er the dead.

XXII.

LAMENT.

"And art thou cold and lowly laid,
Thy foeman's dread, thy people's aid,
Breadalbane's boast, Clan-Alpine's shade!
For thee shall none a requiem say'
—For thee—who loved the minstrel's lay,
For thee, of Bothwell's house the stay,
The shelter of her exiled line—
E'en in this prison-house of thine,
I'll wail for Alpine's honoured pine!
"What groans shall yonder valleys fill!
What shrieks of grief shall rend yon hill!
What tears of burning rage shall thrill,
When mourns thy tribe thy battles done,
Thy fall before the race was won,
Thy sword ungirt ere set of sun!
There breathes not clansman of thy line,
But would have given his life for thine.
O wo for Alpine's honoured pine!
"Sad was thy lot on mortal stage!
The captive thrush may brook the cage,
The prisoned eagle dies for rage.
Brave spirit, do not scorn my strain!
And, when its notes awake again,
E'en she, so long beloved in vain,
Shall with my harp her voice combine,
And mix her wo and tears with mine,
To wail Clan-Alpine's honoured pine."

XXIII.

Ellen, the while, with bursting heart,
Remained in lordly bower apart,
Where played, with many-coloured gleams,
Through storied pane the rising beams.
In vain on gilded roof they fall,
And lightened up a tapestried wall,
And for her use a menial train
A rich collation spread in vain.
The banquet proud, the chamber gay,
Scarce drew one curious glance astray;
Or, if she looked, 'twas but to say,
With better omen dawned the day
In that lone isle, where waved on high
The dun deer's hide for canopy;
Where oft her noble father shared
The simple meal her care prepared,
While Lufra, crouching by her side,
Her station claimed with jealous pride,
And Douglas, bent on woodland game,
Spoke of the chase to Malcolm Græme,
Whose answer, oft at random made,
The wandering of his thoughts betrayed.—
Those who such simple joys have known
Are taught to prize them when they're gone.
But sudden, see, she lifts her head!
The window seeks with cautious tread.
What distant music has the power
To win her in this woful hour!
'Twas from a turret that o'erhung
Her latticed bower, the strain was sung.

XXIV.

LAY OF THE IMPRISONED HUNTSMAN.

"My hawk is tired of perch and hood,
My idle greyhound loathes his food,
My horse is weary of his stall,
And I am sick of captive thrall.
I wish I were as I have been,
Hunting the hart in forest green,
With bended bow and bloodhound free,
For that's the life is meet for me.

"I hate to learn the ebb of time,
From yon dull steeple's drowsy chime,
Or mark it as the sunbeams crawl,
Inch after inch, along the wall.
The lark was wont my matins ring,
The sable rook my vespers sing;
These towers, although a king's they be,
Have not a hall of joy for me.

"No more at dawning morn I rise,
And sun myself in Ellen's eyes,
Drive the fleet deer the forest through,
And homeward wend with evening dew;
A blithsome welcome blithly meet,
And lay my trophies at her feet,
While fled the eve on wing of glee,—
That life is lost to love and me!"

XXV.

The heart-sick lay was hardly said,
The list'ner had not turned her head,
It trickled still, the starting tear,
When light a footstep struck her ear,
And Snowdoun's graceful knight was near.
She turned the hastier, lest again
The prisoner should renew his strain.
"O welcome, brave Fitz-James!" she said;
"How may an almost orphan maid
Pay the deep debt"—"O say not so!
To me no gratitude you owe.
Not mine, alas! the boon to give,
And bid thy noble father live;
I can but be thy guide, sweet maid,
With Scotland's king thy suit to aid.
No tyrant he, though ire and pride
May lead his better mood aside.
Come, Ellen, come!—'tis more than time,
He holds his court at morning prime."—
With beating heart and bosom wrung,
As to a brother's arm she clung;
Gently he dried the falling tear,
And gently whispered hope and cheer;
Her faltering steps half-led, half staid,
Through gallery fair and high arcade,
Till, at his touch, its wings of pride
A portal arch unfolded wide.

XXVI.

Within 'twas brilliant all and light,
A thronging scene of figures bright;
It glowed on Ellen's dazzled sight,
As when the setting sun has given
Ten thousand hues to summer even,
And, from their tissue, fancy frames
Aerial knights and fairy dames.
Still by Fitz-James her footing staid;
A few faint steps she forward made,
Then slow her drooping head she raised,
And fearful round the presence gazed;
For him she sought who owned this state,
The dreaded prince whose will was fate!—
She gazed on many a princely port,
Might well have ruled a royal court;
On many a splendid garb she gazed,—
Then turned bewildered and amazed,
For all stood bare: and, in the room,
Fitz-James alone wore cap and plume.
To him each lady's look was lent;
On him each courtier's eye was bent;
Midst furs and silks and jewels sheen,
He stood, in simple Lincoln green,
The centre of the glittering ring,
And Snowdoun's knight is Scotland's king![5]

XXVII.

As wreath of snow, on mountain breast,
Slides from the rock that gave it rest,
Poor Ellen glided from her stay,
And at the monarch's feet she lay;
No word her choking voice commands,—
She showed the ring—she clasped her hands.
O! not a moment could he brook,
The generous prince, that suppliant look!
Gently he raised her,—and, the while,
Checked with a glance the circle's smile;
Graceful, but grave, her brow he kissed,
And bade her terrors be dismissed;—
"Yes, fair, the wandering poor Fitz-James
The fealty of Scotland claims.
To him thy woes, thy wishes, bring;
He will redeem his signet ring.
Ask nought for Douglas:—yester even,
His prince and he have much forgiven:
Wrong hath he had from slanderous tongue!
I, from his rebel kinsman, wrong.
We would not to the vulgar crowd
Yield what they craved with clamour loud,
Calmly we heard and judged his cause,
Our council aided, and our laws.
I stanched thy father's death-feud stern,
With stout De Vaux and gray Glencairn;
And Bothwell's lord henceforth we own
The friend and bulwark of our throne.—
But, lovely infidel, how now?
What clouds thy misbelieving brow?
Lord James of Douglas, lend thine aid;
Thou must confirm this doubting maid."

XXVIII.

Then forth the noble Douglas sprung,
And on his neck his daughter hung.
The monarch drank, that happy hour,
The sweetest, holiest draught of power—
When it can say, with godlike voice,
Arise, sad virtue, and rejoice!
Yet would not James the general eye
On nature's raptures long should pry;
He stepped between—"Nay, Douglas, nay,
Steal not my proselyte away!
The riddle 'tis my right to read,
That brought this happy chance to speed.—
Yes, Ellen, when disguised I stray
In life's more low but happier way,
'Tis under name which veils my power,
Nor falsely veils—for Stirling's tower
Of yore the name of Snowdoun claims,[6]
And Normans call me James Fitz-James.
Thus watch I o'er insulted laws,
Thus learn to right the injured cause."
Then, in a tone apart and low,
—"Ah, little trait'ress! none must know
What idle dream, what lighter thought,
What vanity full dearly bought,
Joined to thine eye's dark witchcraft, drew
My spell-bound steps to Ben-venue,
In dangerous hour, and all but gave
Thy monarch's life to mountain glaive!"

Aloud he spoke—" Thou still dost hold
That little talisman of gold,
Pledge of my faith, Fitz-James's ring—
What seeks fair Ellen of the king?"

XXIX.

Full well the conscious maiden guessed
He probed the weakness of her breast;
But, with that consciousness there came
A lightning of her fears for Græme,
And more she deemed the monarch's ire
Kindled 'gainst him, who, for her sire,
Rebellious broadsword boldly drew;
And, to her generous feeling true,
She craved the grace of Roderick Dhu.---
" Forbear thy suit;---the king of kings
Alone can stay life's parting wings,
I know his heart, I know his hand,
Have shared his cheer and proved his brand.
My fairest earldom would I give
To bid Clan-Alpine's chieftain live!---
Hast thou no other boon to crave?
No other captive friend to save?"---
Blushing, she turned her from the king,
And to the Douglas gave the ring,
As if she wished her sire to speak
The suit that stained her glowing cheek.---
" Nay, then, my pledge has lost its force,
And stubborn justice holds her course.
Malcolm, come forth!"---And, at the word,
Down kneeled the Græme to Scotland's lord.
" For thee, rash youth, no suppliant sues,
From thee may vengeance claim her dues,
Who, nurtured underneath our smile,
Has paid our care by treacherous wile,
And sought, amid thy faithful clan,
A refuge for an outlawed man,
Dishonouring thus thy loyal name.---
Fetters and warder for the Græme!"
His chain of gold the king unstrung,
The links o'er Malcolm's neck he flung,
Then gently drew the glittering band,
And laid the clasp on Ellen's hand.

Harp of the north, farewell! The hills grow dark,
On purple peaks a deeper shade descending;
In twilight copse the glow-worm lights her spark;
The deer, half seen, are to the covert wending.
Resume thy wizzard elm! the fountain lending,
And the wild breeze, thy wilder minstrelsy;
Thy numbers sweet with nature's vespers blending,
With distant echo from the fold and lea,
And herd-boy's evening pipe, and hum of housing bee.

Yet, once again, farewell, thou minstrel harp!
Yet, once again, forgive my feeble sway,
And little reck I of the censure sharp,
May idly cavil at an idle lay.
Much have I owed thy strains on life's long way,
Thro' secret woes the world has never known,
When on the weary night dawned wearier day,
And bitter was the grief devoured alone.
That I o'erlive such woes, enchantress! is thine own.

Hark! as my lingering footsteps slow retire---
Some spirit of the air has waked thy string!
'Tis now a seraph bold, with touch of fire,
'Tis now the blush of fairy's frolic wing.
Receding now, the dying numbers ring
Fainter and fainter down the rugged dell,
And now the mountain breezes scarcely bring
A wandering witch-note of the distant spell---
And now, 'tis silent all! enchantress, fare thee well!

NOTES TO CANTO I.

1. —— the heights of Uam-var,
And roused the cavern, where, 'tis told,
A giant made his den of old.—P. 125.

Ua-var, as the name is pronounced, or more properly *Uaighmor*, is a mountain to the north-east of the village of Callender in Menteith, deriving its name, which signifies the great den, or cavern, from a sort of retreat among the rocks on the south side, said, by tradition, to have been the abode of a giant. In latter times, it was the refuge of robbers and banditti, who have been only extirpated within these forty or fifty years. Strictly speaking, this strong-hold is not a cave, as the name would imply, but a sort of small inclosure, or recess, surrounded with large rocks, and open above head. It may have been originally designed as a toil for deer, who might get in from the outside, but would find it difficult to return. This opinion prevails among the old sportsmen and deer stalkers in the neighbourhood.

2. Two dogs of black St. Hubert's breed,
Unmatch'd for courage, breath, and speed.—P. 125.

" The hounds which we call Saint Hubert's hounds, are commonly all blacke, yet neuertheless, their race is so mingled at these days, that we find them of all colours. These are the hounds which the abbots of St. Hubert haue always kept some of their race or kind, in honour or remembrance of the saint, which was a hunter with St. Eustace. Whereupon we may conceiue that (by the grace of God) all good huntsmen shall follow them into paradise. To returne vnto my former purpose, this kind of dogges hath beene dispersed through the countries of Henault, Lorayne, Flaunders, and Burgoyne. They are mighty of body, neuertheless their legges are low and short, likewise they are not swift, although they be very good of sent, hunting chases which are farre straggled, fearing neither water nor cold, and doe more couet the chases that smell, as foxes, bore, and such like, than other, because they find themselues neither of swiftness nor courage to hunt and kill the chases that are lighter and swifter. The bloodhounds of this colour prooue good, especially those that are cole-blacke, but I made no great account to breede on them, or to keepe the kind, and yet I found a book whiche a hunter did dedicate to a prince of Lorayne, which seemed to loue hunting much, wherein was a blason, which the same hunter gaue to his bloodhound, called Souyllard, which was white:

My name came first from holy Hubert's race,
Souyllard my sire, a hound of singular grace.

Whereupon we may presume that some of the kind prooue white sometimes, but they are not of the kind of the greffiers or bouxes, which we haue at these days."—*The Noble Art of Venerie or Hunting, translated and collected for the use of all Noblemen and Gentlemen.* Lond. 1611, 4to. p. 15.

3. For the death wound, and death halloo,
Mustered his breath, his whinyard drew.—P. 125.

When the stag turned to bay, the ancient hunter had the perilous task of going in upon, and killing or disabling the desperate animal. At certain times of the year this was held particularly dangerous, a wound received from a stag's horns being then deemed poisonous, and more dangerous

than one from the tusks of a boar, as the old rhyme testifies:

If thou be hurt with hart, it brings thee to thy bier;
But barber's hand will boar's hurt heal, therefore thou needst not fear.

At all times, however, the task was dangerous, and to be adventured upon wisely and warily, either by getting behind the stag while he was gazing on the hounds, or by watching an opportunity to gallop roundly in upon him, and kill him with the sword. See many directions to this purpose in the Booke of Hunting, chap. 41. Wilson the historian has recorded a providential escape which befel him in this hazardous sport, while a youth and follower of the earl of Essex.

"Sir Peter Lee, of Lime, in Cheshire, invited my lord one summer, to hunt the stagg. And having a great stagg in chase, and many gentlemen in the pursuit, the stagg took soyle. And divers, whereof I was one, alighted, and stood with swords drawne, to have a cut at him, at his coming out of the water. The staggs there being wonderfully fierce and dangerous, made us youths more eager to be at him. But he escaped us all; and it was my misfortune to be hindered of my coming nere him, the way being slipperie, by a fall; which gave occasion to some, who did not know mee, to speak as if I had falne for feare. Which being told me, I left the stagg, and followed the gentleman who [first] spake it. But I found him of that cold temper, that it seems his words made an escape from him; as by his denial and repentance it appeared. But this made mee more violent in the pursuit of the stagg, to recover my reputation. And I happened to be the only horseman in when the doggs sett him up at bay; and approaching near him on horsebacke, he broke through the dogs and ran at mee, and tore my horse's side with his hornes, close by my thigh. Then I quitted my horse, and grew more cunning, (for the doggs had sette him up againe,) stealing behind him with my sword, and cut his ham-strings; and then got upon his back, and cut his throate; which, as I was doing, the company came in, and blamed my rashness for running such a hazard."—*Peck's Desiderata Curiosa*, ii, 464.

4. And now, to issue from the glen,
No pathway meets the wanderer's ken,
Unless he climb, with footing nice,
A far projecting precipice.—P. 126.

Until the present road was made through the romantic pass which I have presumptuously attempted to describe in the preceding stanzas, there was no mode of issuing out of the defile, called the Trosachs, excepting by a sort of ladder, composed of the branches and roots of the trees.

5. To meet with highland plunderers here
Were worse than loss of steed or deer.—P. 126.

The clans who inhabited the romantic regions in the neighbourhood of Loch-Katrine, were, even until a late period, much addicted to predatory excursions upon their lowland neighbours.

"In former times, those parts of this district, which are situated beyond the Grampian range, were rendered almost inaccessible by strong barriers of rocks, and mountains, and lakes. It was a border country, and though on the very verge of the low country, it was almost totally sequestered from the world, and, as it were, insulated with respect to society.

"'Tis well known, that, in the highlands, it was, in former times, accounted not only lawful, but honourable, among hostile tribes, to commit depredations on one another; and these habits of the age were perhaps strengthened in this district, by the circumstances which have been mentioned. It bordered on a country, the inhabitants of which, while they were richer, were less warlike than they, and widely differenced by language and manners."—*Graham's Sketches of Scenery in Perthshire*. Edin. 1806, p. 97.

The reader will therefore be pleased to remember, that the scene of this poem is laid in a time,

When tooming faulds, or sweeping of a glen,
Had still been held the deed of gallant men.

6. A gray-haired sire, whose eye intent
Was on the visioned future bent.—P. 127.

If force of evidence could authorise us to believe facts inconsistent with the general laws of nature, enough might be produced in favour of the existence of the second sight. It is called in Gaelic *Taishitaraugh*, from *Taish*, and unreal or shadowy appearance; and those possessed of the faculty are called *Taishatrin*, which may be aptly translated visionaries. Martin, a steady believer in the second sight, gives the following account of it:

"The second sight is a singular faculty, of seeing an otherwise invisible object, without any previous means used by the person that used it, for that end; the vision makes such a lively impression upon the seers, that they neither see, nor think of any thing else, except the vision, as long as it continues; and then they appear pensive or jovial, according to the object which was represented to them.

"At the sight of a vision, the eyelids of the person are erected, and the eyes continue staring until the object vanish. This is obvious to others who are by, when the persons happen to see a vision, and occurred more than once to my own observation, and to others that were with me.

"There is one in Skie, of whom his acquaintance observed, that when he sees a vision, the inner part of his eyelids turns so far upwards, that after the object disappears, he must draw them down with his fingers, and sometimes employ others to draw them down, which he finds to be the much easier way.

"This faculty of the second sight does not lineally descend in a family, as some imagine, for I know several parents who are endowed with it, but their children not, and *vice versa;* neither is it acquired by any previous compact. And, after a strict inquiry, I could never learn that this faculty was communicable any way whatsoever.

"The seer knows neither the object, time, nor place of a vision, before it appears; and the same object is often seen by different persons, living at a considerable distance from one another. The true way of judging as to the time and circumstance of an object, is by observation; for several persons of judgment, without this faculty, are more capable to judge of the design of a vision, than a novice that is a seer. If an object appear in the day or night, it will come to pass sooner or later accordingly.

"If an object is seen early in the morning (which is not frequent) it will be accomplished in a few hours afterwards. If at noon, it will commonly be accomplished that very day. If in the evening, perhaps that night; if after candles be lighted, it will be accomplished that night: the later always in accomplishment, by weeks, months, and some-

times years, according to the time of night the vision is seen.

"When a shroud is perceived about one, it is a sure prognostic of death: the time is judged according to the height of it about the person; for if it is seen above the middle, death is not to be expected for the space of a year, and perhaps some months longer; and as it is frequently seen to ascend higher towards the head, death is concluded to be at hand within a few days, if not hours, as daily experience confirms. Examples of this kind were shown me, when the persons of whom the observations were then made, enjoyed perfect health.

"One instance was lately foretold by a seer that was a novice, concerning the death of one of my acquaintance; this was communicated to a few only, and with great confidence: I being one of the number, did not in the least regard it, until the death of the person, about the time foretold, did confirm me of the certainty of the prediction. The novice mentioned above is now a skilful seer, as appears from many late instances: he lives in the parish of St. Mary's, the most northern in Skie.

"If a woman is seen standing at a man's left hand, it is a presage that she will be his wife, whether they be married to others, or unmarried, at the time of the apparition.

"If two or three woman are seen at once near a man's left hand, she that is next him will undoubtedly be his wife first, and so on, whether all three, or the man, be single or married at the time of the vision or not: of which there are several late instances among those of my acquaintance. It is an ordinary thing for them to see a man that is to come to the house shortly after: and if he is not of the seer's acquaintance, yet he gives such a lively description of his stature, complexion, habit, &c. that upon his arrival he answers the character given him in all respects.

"If the person so appearing be one of the seer's acquaintance, he will tell his name, as well as other particulars; and he can tell by his countenance whether he comes in a good or bad humour.

"I have been seen thus myself by seers of both sexes, at some hundred miles distance: some that saw me in this manner, had never seen me personally, and it happened according to their visions, without any previous design of mine to go to those places, my coming there being purely accidental.

"It is ordinary with them to see houses, gardens, and trees, in places void of all three; and this in progress of time uses to be accomplished: as at Magshot, in the Isle of Skie, where there were but a few sorry cow-houses, thatched with straw, yet, in a very few years after, the vision, which appeared often, was accomplished by the building of several good houses on the very spot represented by the seers, and by the planting of orchards there.

"To see a spark of fire fall upon one's arm or breast, is a forerunner of a dead child to be seen in the arms of those persons, of which there are several fresh instances.

"To see a seat empty at the time of one's sitting in it, is a presage of that person's death soon after.

"When a novice, or one that has lately obtained the second-sight, sees a vision in the night time, without doors, and comes near a fire, he presently falls into a swoon.

"Some find themselves as it were in a crowd of people, having a corpse which they carry along with them; and after such visions the seers come in sweating, and described the people that appeared: if there be any of their acquaintance among 'em, they give an account of their names, as also of the bearers, but they know nothing concerning the corpse.

"All those who have the second sight do not always see these visions at once, though they be together at the time. But if one who has this faculty designedly touch his fellow-seer at the instant of a vision's appearing, then the second sees it as well as the first: and this is sometimes discerned by those that are near them on such occasions."—*Martin's Description of the Western Islands*, 1716, 8vo. p. 300, *et seq.*

To those particulars, innumerable examples might be added, all attested by grave and credible authors. But, in despite of evidence, which neither Bacon, Boyle, nor Johnson were able to resist, the *Tuisch*, with all its visionary properties, seems to be now universally abandoned to the use of poetry. The exquisitely beautiful poem of Lochiel will at once occur to the recollection of every reader.

7. Here, for retreat in dangerous hour,
Some chief had framed a rustic bower.— P. 128.

The Celtic chieftains, whose lives were continually exposed to peril, had usually, in the most retired spot of their domains, some place of retreat for the hour of necessity, which, as circumstances would admit, was a tower, a cavern, or a rustic hut, in a strong and secluded situation. One of these last gave refuge to the unfortunate Charles Edward, in his perilous wanderings after the battle of Culloden.

"It was situated in the face of a very rough, high, and rocky mountain, called Letternilichk, still a part of Benalder, full of great stones and crevices, and some scattered wood interspersed. The habitation called the Cage, in the face of that mountain, was within a small thick bush of wood. There were first some rows of trees laid down, in order to level a floor for a habitation; and, as the place was steep, this raised the lower side to an equal height with the other; and these trees, in the way of joists or planks, were levelled with earth and gravel. There were between the trees, growing naturally on their own roots, some stakes fixed in the earth, which, with the trees, were interwoven with ropes, made of heath and birch twigs, up to the top of the Cage, it being of a round or rather oval shape; and the whole thatched and covered over with fog. The whole fabric hung, as it were, by a large tree, which reclined from the one end, all along the roof, to the other, and which gave it the name of a Cage; and by chance there happened to be two stones at a small distance from one another, in the side next the precipice, resembling the pillars of a chimney, where the fire was placed. The smoke had its vent out here, all along the fall of the rock, which was so much of the same colour, that one could discover no difference in the clearest day."—*Home's History of the Rebellion*, Lond. 1802, 4to. p. 381.

8. My sire's tall form might grace the part
Of Ferragus, or Ascabart.—P. 128.

These two sons of Anak flourished in romantic fable. The first is well known to the admirers of Ariosto, by the name of Ferrau. He was an antagonist of Orlando, and was at length slain by him in single combat. There is a romance in the Auchinleck MS., in which Ferragus is thus described:

"On a day come tiding
Unto Charls the king,
Al of a doughti knight
Was comen to Navers,
Stout he was and fers,
Veruagu he hight.
Of Babiloun the soudan
Thider him sende gan,
With king Charls to fight.
So hard he was to fond*
That no dint of brond
No greued him, aplight.
He hadde twenti men strengthe,
And forti fet of lengthe
Thilke painim hede.†
And four feet in the face,
Y-metent in the place,
And fiften in brede.§
His nose was a fot and more;
His brow, as bristles wore;‖
He that it seighe it sede.
He loked lotheliche,
And was swart¶ as any piche,
Of him men might adrede."

Romance of Charlemagne, i, 461, 484.—*Auchinleck, MS.* fol. 265.

Ascapart, or Ascabart, makes a very material figure in the history of Bevis of Hampton, by whom he was conquered. His effigies may be seen guarding one side of a gate at Southampton, while the other is occupied by sir Bevis himself. The dimensions of Ascabart were little inferior to those of Ferragus, if the following description be correct:

"They metten with a geaunt,
With a lotheliche semblaunt.
He was wonderliche strong
Rome** thretti fote long.
His berd was bot gret and rowe;††
A space of a fot betweene is‡‡ browe:
His clob was, to yeue§§ a strok,
A lite bodi of an oak.‖‖
Beues hadde of him wonder gret,
And askede him what a bet,¶¶
And yaf*** men of this contré
Were ase meche††† ase was he.
'Me name,' a sede,‡‡‡ 'is Ascopard,
Garci me sent hiderward,
For to bring this quene ayen,
And the Beues her of-slen.§§§
Icham Garci is ‖‖‖ champioun,
And was i-driue out of me¶¶¶ toun
Al for that ich was so lite.****
Eueri man me wolde smite,
Ich was so lite and so merugh,††††
Eueri man me clepede dwerugh.‡‡‡‡
And now icham in this londe,
I wax mor ich§§§§ understonde,
And stranger than other tene;‖‖‖‖
And that schel on us be sene."

Sir Bevis of Hampton, i. 2512. *Auchinleck MS.* fol. 189.

9. Though all unasked his birth and name.—P. 128.

The highlanders, who carried hospitality to a punctilious excess, are said to have considered it as churlish, to ask a stranger his name or lineage, before he had taken refreshment. Feuds were so frequent among them, that a contrary rule would, in many cases, have produced the discovery of some circumstance, which might have excluded the guest from the benefit of the assistance he stood in need of.

10. ——And still a harp unseen
Filled up the symphony between.—P. 129.

"They (meaning the highlanders) delight much in musicke, but chiefly in harps and clairschoes of their own fashion. The strings of the clairschoes are made of brasse-wire, and the strings of the harps of sinews, which strings they strike either with their nayles, growing long, or else with an instrument appointed for that use. They take great pleasure to decke their harps and clairschoes with silver and precious stones; the poore ones that cannot attayne hereunto, decke them with christall. They sing verses, prettily compound, contayning (for the most part) prayses of valiant men. There is not almost any other argument, whereof their rhymes intreat. They speak the ancient French language, altered a little."*—"The harp and clairschoes are now only heard of in the highlands in ancient song. At what period these instruments ceased to be used, is not on record; and tradition is silent on this head. But, as Irish harpers occasionally visited the highlands and western isles till lately, the harp might have been extant so late as the middle of the present century. Thus far we know, that from remote times down to the present, harpers were received as welcome guests, particularly in the highlands of Scotland: and so late as the latter end of the sixteenth century, as appears by the above quotation, the harp was in common use among the natives of the western isles. How it happened that the noisy and inharmonious bagpipe banished the soft and expressive harp, we cannot say; but certain it is, that the bagpipe is now the only instrument that obtains universally in the highland districts."—*Campbell's Journey through North Britain*, Lond. 1808, 4to. i, 175.

Mr. Gunn, of Edinburgh, has lately published a curious essay upon the harp and harp music of the highlands of Scotland. That the instrument was once in common use there, is most certain. Cleland numbers an acquaintance with it among the few accomplishments which his satire allows to the highlanders:

In nothing they're accounted sharp,
Except in bag-pipe or in harp.

NOTES TO CANTO II.

1. Morn's genial influence roused a minstrel gray.—P. 130.

That highland chieftains, to a late period, retained in their service the bard, as a family officer, admits of very easy proof. The author of the letters from Scotland, an officer of engineers, quartered at Inverness about 1720, who certainly cannot be deemed a favourable witness, gives the following account of the office, and of a bard, whom he heard exercise his talent of recitation:

"The bard skilled in the genealogy of all the highland families, sometimes preceptor to the young laird, celebrates in Irish verse the original of the tribe, the famous warlike actions of the successive heads, and sings his own lyricks as an opiate to the chief, when indisposed for sleep; but poets are not equally esteemed and honoured in all countries. I happened to be a witness of the dishonour done to the muse, at the house of one of the chiefs, where two of these bards were set at a good distance, at the lower end of a long table, with a parcel of highlanders of no extraordinary appearance, over a cup of ale. Poor inspiration!

* Found, proved. † Had. ‡ Measured. § Breadth. ‖ Were. ¶ Black. ** Fully. †† Rough. ‡‡ His. §§ Give. ‖‖ The stem of a little oak tree. ¶¶ He hight, was called. *** If. ††† Great. ‡‡‡ He said. §§§ Slay. ‖‖‖ His. ¶¶¶ My. **** Little †††† Lean. ‡‡‡‡ Dwarf. §§§§ Greater, taller. ‖‖‖‖ Ten.

* Vide "Certayne Matters concerning the Realme of Scotland, &c. as they were Anno Domini 1597. Lond. 1603." 4to.

"They were not asked to drink a glass of wine at our table, though the whole company consisted only of the *great man*, one of his near relations, and myself.

"After some little time, the chief ordered one of them to sing me a highland song. The bard readily obeyed, and with a hoarse voice, and in a tune of few various notes, began, as I was told, one of his own lyricks; and when he had proceeded to the fourth or fifth stanza, I perceived, by the names of several persons, glens, and mountains, which I had known or heard of before, that it was an account of some clan battle. But in his going on, the chief (who piques himself upon his school-learning) at some particular passage, bid him cease, and cryed out, 'There's nothing like that in Virgil or Homer.' I bowed, and told him I believed so. This you may believe was very edifying and delightful."—*Letters from Scotland*, ii, 167.

2. ——The Græme.—P. 130.

The ancient and powerful family of Graham, (which, for metrical reasons, is here spelt after the Scottish pronunciation,) held extensive possessions in the counties of Dumbarton and Stirling. Few families can boast of more historical renown, having claim to three of the most remarkable characters in the Scottish annals. Sir John the Græme, the faithful and undaunted partaker of the labours and patriotic warfare of Wallace, fell in the unfortunate field of Falkirk, in 1298. The celebrated marquis of Montrose, in whom De Retz saw realized his abstract idea of the heroes of antiquity, was the second of these worthies. And, notwithstanding the severity of his temper, and the rigour with which he executed the oppressive mandates of the princes whom he served, I do not hesitate to name as the third, John Grahame, of Claverhouse, viscount of Dundee, whose heroic death in the arms of victory, may be allowed to cancel the memory of his cruelty to the non-conformists, during the reigns of Charles II, and James II.

3. This harp, which erst saint Modan swayed.—P. 131.

I am not prepared to show that saint Modan was a performer on the harp. It was, however, no unsaintly accomplishment; for saint Dunstan certainly did play upon that instrument, which, retaining, as was natural, a portion of the sanctity attached to its master's character, announced future events by its spontaneous sound. "But labouring once in these mechanic arts for a devoute matrone that had sett him on work, his violl, that hung by him on the wall, of its own accord, without anie man's helpe, distinctly sounded this anthime: *Gaudent in cælis animæ sanctorum qui Christi vestigia sunt secuti; et quia pro eius amore sanguinem suum fuderunt, ideo cum Christo gaudent æternum.* Whereat all the companie being much astonished, turned their eyes from behoulding him working, to looke on that strange accident."——"Not long after, manie of the court that hitherunto had born a kind of fayned friendship towards him, began now greatly to envie at his progress and rising in goodness, using manie crooked, backbiting meanes to diffame his vertues with the black maskes of hypocrisie. And the better to authorise their calumnie, they brought in this that happened in the violl, affirming it to have been done by art magick. What more? this wicked rumour encreased dayly, till the king and others of the nobilitie taking hould thereof, Dunstan grew odious in their sight. Therefore he resolued to leaue the court, and goe to Elphegus, surnamed the Bauld, then bishop of Winchester, who was his cozen. Which his enemies understanding, they layd wayte for him in the way, and hauing thrown him off his horse, beate him, and dragged him in the durt in the most miserable manner, meaning to haue slaine him, had not a companie of mastiue dogges, that came unlookt uppon them, defended and redeemed him from their cruelties. When with sorrow he was ashamed to see dogges more humane than they. And giuing thankes to Almightie God, he sensibly againe perceaued that the tunes of his violl had giuen him a warning of future accidents." *Flower of the Lives of the most renowned Saincts of England, Scotland, and Ireland, by the R. Father Hierome Porter.* Doway, 1632, 4to. tome i, p. 438.

The same supernatural circumstance is alluded to by the anonymous author of "Grim, the Collier of Croydon."

"——[*Dunstan's harp sounds on the wall.*]
"*Forest.* Hark, hark, my lords, the holy abbot's harp
Sounds by itself so hanging on the wall!

"*Dunstan.* Unhallowed man, that scorn'st the sacred rede,
Hark, how the testimony of my truth
Sounds heavenly music with an angel's hand,
To testify Dunstan's integrity,
And prove thy active boast of no effect."

4. Ere Douglasses, to ruin driven,
Were exiled from their native heaven.—P. 131.

The downfall of the Douglasses of the house of Angus, during the reign of James V, is the event alluded to in the text. The earl of Angus, it will be remembered, had married the queen dowager, and availed himself of the right which he thus acquired, as well as of his extensive power, to retain the king in a sort of tutelage, which approached very near to captivity. Several open attempts were made to rescue James from this thraldom, with which he was well known to be deeply disgusted; but the valour of the Douglasses, and their allies, gave them the victory in every conflict. At length, the king, while residing at Falkland, contrived to escape by night out of his own court and palace, and rode full speed to Stirling castle, where the governor, who was of the opposite faction, joyfully received him. Being thus at liberty, James speedily summoned around him such peers as he knew to be most inimical to the domination of Angus, and laid his complaint before them, says Pitscottie, "with great lamentations; showing to them how he was holden in subjection, thir years bygone, by the earl of Angus, and his kin and friends, who oppressed the whole country, and spoiled it, under the pretence of justice and his authority; and had slain many of his lieges, kinsmen, and friends, because they would have had it mended at their hands, and put him at liberty, as he ought to have been, at the counsel of his whole lords, and not have been subjected and corrected with no particular men, by the rest of his nobles: Therefore, said he, I desire, my lords, that I may be satisfied of the said earl, his kin, and friends; for I avow, that Scotland shall not hold us both, while (*i. e. till*) I be revenged on him and his.

"The lords hearing the king's complaint and lamentation, and also the great rage, fury, and malice, that he bore toward the earl of Angus, his kin and friends, they concluded all, and thought it best that he should be summoned to underly the law; if he fand not caution, nor yet compear himself, that he should be put to the horn, with all

his kin and friends, so many as were contained in the letters. And further, the lords ordained, by advice of his majesty, that his brother and friends should be summoned to find caution to underly the law within a certain day, or else be put to the horn. But the earl appeared not, nor none for him; and so he was put to the horn, with all his kin and friends: so many as were contained in the summons, that compeared not, were banished, and holden traitors to the king."—*Lindsay of Pitscottie's History of Scotland.* Edinburgh, fol. p. 142.

5. In Holy-Rood a knight he slew.—P. 131.

This was by no means an uncommon occurrence in the court of Scotland; nay, the presence of the sovereign himself scarcely restrained the ferocious and inveterate feuds which were the perpetual source of bloodshed among the Scottish nobility. The following instance of the murder of sir George Stuart of Ochiltree, called *The Bloody*, by the celebrated Francis, earl of Bothwell, may be produced among many; but, as the offence given in the royal court will hardly bear a vernacular translation, I shall leave the story in Johnstone's Latin, referring for farther particulars to the naked simplicity of Birrell's Diary, 30th July, 1588.

"Mors improbi hominis non tam ipsa immerita, quam pessimo exemplo in publicam fœdè perpetua. Gulielmus Stuartus Alkiltrius, Arani frater, naturâ ac moribus, cujus sæpius memini, vulgo propter sitem sanguinis *sanguinarius* dictus, à Bothvelio, in Sanctæ Crucis Regiâ, exardescente, irâ mendacii probo lacessitus, obscænum osculum liberius retorquebat; Bothvelius hanc contumeliam tacitus tulit, sed ingentum irarum molem animo concepit. Utrinque postridie Edinburgi conventum, totidem numero comitibus armatus, præsidii causa, et acriter pugnatum est; cæteris amicis et clientibus metu torpentibus, aut vi absterritis, ipse Stuartus fortissimè dimicat, tandem exensso gladio à Bothvelie, Scythicâ feritate transfoditur, sine cujusquam misericordiâ; habuit itaque quem debuit exitum. Dignus erat Stuartus qui paterentur; Bothvelius qui faceret. Vulgus sanguinem sanguine prædicabit, et horum eruore innocuorum manibus egregiè parentatum."—Johnstoni *Historia Rerum Britannicarum*, ab anno 1572, ad annum 1628. Amstelodami, 1655, fol. p. 135.

6. The Douglas, like a stricken deer,
Disowned by every noble peer.—P. 131.

The exiled state of this powerful race is not exaggerated in this and subsequent passages. The hatred of James against the race of Douglas was so inveterate, that, numerous as their allies were, and disregarded as the regal authority had usually been in similar cases, their nearest friends, even in the most remote parts of Scotland, durst not entertain them, unless under the strictest and closest disguise. James Douglas, son of the banished earl of Angus, afterwards well known by the title of earl of Morton, lurked, during the exile of his family, in the north of Scotland, under the assumed name of James Innes, otherwise *James the Grieve*, (*i. e.* Reve or Bailiff.) "And as he bore the name," says Godscroft, "so did he also execute the office of a grieve or overseer of the lands and rents, the corn and cattle, of him with whom he lived." From the habits of frugality and observation, which he acquired in this humble situation, the historian traces that intimate acquaintance with popular character, which enabled him to rise so high in the state, and that honourable economy by which he repaired and established the shattered estates of Angus and Morton.—*History of the House of Douglas.* Edinburgh, 1743, vol. ii, p. 160.

7. ——Maronnan's cell.—P. 131.

The parish of Kilmarnock, at the eastern extremity of Loch-Lomond, derives its name from a cell or chapel, dedicated to saint Maronoch, or Marnoch, or Maronnan, about whose sanctity very little is now remembered. There is a fountain devoted to him in the same parish; but its virtues, like the merits of its patron, have fallen into oblivion.

8. ——Bracklinn's thundering wave.—P. 132.

This is a beautiful cascade made at a place called the Bridge of Bracklinn, by a mountain stream called the Keltie, about a mile from the village of Callender, in Menteith. Above a chasm where the brook precipitates itself from a height of at least fifty feet, there is thrown, for the convenience of the neighbourhood, a rustic foot bridge, of about three feet in breadth, and without ledges, which is scarcely to be crossed by a stranger without awe and apprehension.

9. For Tineman forged by fairy lore.—P. 132.

Archibald, the third earl of Douglas, was so unfortunate in all his enterprizes, that he acquired the epithet of Tineman, because he *tined*, or lost, his followers in every battle which he fought. He was vanquished, as every reader must remember, in the bloody battle of Homildon-hill, near Wooler, where he himself lost an eye, and was made prisoner by Hotspur. He was no less unfortunate when allied with Percy, being wounded and taken at the battle of Shrewsbury. He was so unsuccessful in an attempt to besiege Roxburgh Castle, that it was called the *Foul Raid*, or disgraceful expedition. His ill fortune left him indeed at the battle of Beauge, in France; but it was only to return with double emphasis at the subsequent action of Vernoil, the last and most unlucky of his encounters, in which he fell, with the flower of the Scottish chivalry, then serving as auxiliaries in France, and about two thousand common soldiers, A. D. 1424.

10. Did, self-unscabbarded, fore-show
The footsteps of a secret foe.—P. 132.

The ancient warriors, whose hope and confidence rested chiefly in their blades, were accustomed to deduce omens from them, especially from such as were supposed to have been fabricated by enchanted skill, of which we have various instances in the romances and legends of the time. The wonderful sword *Skofnung*, wielded by the celebrated Hrolf Kraka, was of this description. It was deposited in the tomb of the monarch at his death, and taken from thence by Skeggo, a celebrated pirate, who bestowed it upon his son-in-law, Kormak, with the following curious directions; "The manner of using it will appear strange to you. A small bag is attached to it, which take heed not to violate. Let not the rays of the sun touch the upper part of the handle, nor unsheath it unless thou art ready for battle. But when thou comest to the place of fight, go aside from the rest, grasp and extend the sword, and breathe upon it. Then a small worm will creep out of the handle; lower the handle that he may more easily return into it." Kormak, after having received the sword, returned home to his mother. He showed the sword, and attempted to draw it, as unnecessarily as ineffectually, for he could not pluck it out of the

sheath. His mother, Dalla, exclaimed, "Do not despise the counsel given to thee, my son." Kormak, however, repeating his efforts, pressed down the handle with his feet, and tore off the bag, when Skofnung emitted a hollow groan: but still he could not unsheath the sword. Kormak then went out with Bessus, whom he had challenged to fight with him, and drew apart at the place of combat. He sat down upon the ground, and ungirding the sword, which he bore above his vestments, did not remember to shield the hilt from the rays of the sun. In vain he endeavoured to draw it, till he placed his foot against the hilt; then the worm issued from it. But Kormak did not rightly handle the weapon, in consequence whereof good fortune deserted it. As he unsheathed Skofnung, it emitted a hollow murmur." *Bartholini, de Causis Contemptæ a Danis adhuc Gentilibus Mortis, Libri Tres, Hafniæ*, 1689, 4to. p. 574.

To the history of this sentient and prescient weapon, I beg leave to add, from memory, the following legend, for which I cannot produce any better authority. A young nobleman, of high hopes and fortune, chanced to lose his way in the town which he inhabited, the capital, if I mistake not, of a German province. He had accidentally involved himself among the narrow and winding streets of a suburb, inhabited by the lowest order of the people, and an approaching thunder-shower determined him to ask a short refuge in the most decent habitation that was near him. He knocked at the door, which was opened by a tall man of a grisly and ferocious aspect, and sordid dress. The stranger was readily ushered to a chamber, where swords, scourges, and machines, which seemed to be implements of torture, were suspended on the wall. One of these swords dropped from its scabbard, as the nobleman, after a moment's hesitation, crossed the threshold. His host immediately stared at him with such a marked expression, that the young man could not help demanding his name and business, and the meaning of his looking at him so fixedly. "I am," answered the man, "the public executioner of this city; and the incident you have observed is a sure augury that I shall, in discharge of my duty, one day cut off your head with the weapon which has just now spontaneously unsheathed itself." The nobleman lost no time in leaving his place of refuge; but, engaging in some of the plots of the period, was shortly after decapitated by that very man and instrument.

Lord Lovat is said, by the author of the letters from Scotland, to have affirmed that a number of swords that hung up in the hall of the mansion-house leaped of themselves out of the scabbard at the instant he was born. This story passed current among his clan, but, like that of the story I have just quoted, proved an unfortunate omen.—*Letters from Scotland*, vol. ii, p. 214.

11. ——————The pibroch proud.—P. 132.

The connoisseurs in pipe-music affect to discover in a well-composed pibroch, the imitative sounds of march, conflict, flight, pursuit, and all the "current of a heady fight." To this opinion, Dr. Beattie has given his suffrage in the following elegant passage; "A *pibroch* is a species of tune, peculiar, I think, to the highlands and western isles of Scotland. It is performed on a bagpipe, and differs totally from all other music. Its rhythm is so irregular, and its notes, especially in the quick movement, so mixed and huddled together, that a stranger finds it impossible to reconcile his ear to it, so as to perceive its modulation. Some of these pibrochs, being intended to represent a battle, begin with a grave motion, resembling a march: then gradually quicken into the onset: run off with noisy confusion, and turbulent rapidity, to imitate the conflict and pursuit; then swell into a few flourishes of triumphant joy; and perhaps close with the wild and slow wailings of a funeral procession."—*Essay on Laughter and Ludicrous Composition*, chap. iii, *Note*.

12. Roderigh Vich Alpine dhu, ho! ieroe!—P. 133.

Besides his ordinary name and surname, which were chiefly used in the intercourse with the lowlands, every highland chief had an epithet expressive of his patriarchal dignity as head of the clan, and which was common to all his predecessors and successors, as Pharaoh to the kings of Egypt, or Arsaces to those of Parthia. This name was usually a patronymic expressive of his decent from the founder of the family. Thus the duke of Argyle is called Mac-Callum More, or the *Son of Colin the Great*. Sometimes, however, it is derived from armorial distinctions, or the memory of some great feat: thus lord Seaforth, as chief of the Mackenzies, or Clan-Kennet, bears the epithet of Caber-fae, or *Buck's Head*, as representative of Colin Fitzgerald, founder of the family, who saved the Scottish king when endangered by a stag. But besides this title, which belonged to his office and dignity, the chieftain had usually another peculiar to himself, which distinguished him from the chieftains of the same race. This was sometimes derived from complexion, as *dhu* or *roy;* sometimes from size, as *beg* or *more;* at other times, from some particular exploit, or from some peculiarity of habit or appearance. The line of the text therefore signifies,

Black Roderick, the descendant of Alpine.

The song itself is intended as an imitation of the *jorrams*, or boat-songs of the highlanders, which were usually composed in honour of a favourite chief. They are so adapted as to keep time with the sweep of the oars, and it is easy to distinguish between those intended to be sung to the oars of a galley, where the stroke is lengthened and doubled as it were, and those which were timed to the rowers of an ordinary boat.

13.—the best of Loch-Lomond lie dead on her side.—P. 133.

The Lennox, as the district is called, which encircles the lower extremity of Loch-Lomond, was peculiarly exposed to the incursions of the mountaineers, who inhabited the inaccessible fastnesses at the upper end of the lake, and the neighbouring district of Loch-Katrine. These were often marked by circumstances of great ferocity, of which the noted conflict of Glen-fruin is a celebrated instance. This was a clan-battle, in which the Macgregors, headed by Allaster Macgregor, chief of the clan, encountered the sept of the Colquhouns, commanded by sir Humphry Colquhoun of Luss. It is on all hands allowed that the action was desperately fought, and that the Colquhouns were defeated with slaughter, leaving two hundred of their name dead upon the field. But popular tradition has added other horrors to the tale. It is said, that sir Humphry Colquhoun, who was on horseback, escaped to the castle of Benechra, or Banochar, and was next day dragged out and murdered by the victorious Macgregors in cold blood. Buchanan of Auchmar, however, speaks of his slaughter as a subsequent event, and as perpetrated by the Macfarlanes. Again it is reported, that the Macgregors murdered a number of youths, whom re-

port of the intended battle had brought to be spectators, and whom the Colquhouns, anxious for their safety, had shut up in a barn to be out of danger. One account of the Macgregors denies this circumstance entirely; another ascribes it to the savage and blood-thirsty disposition of a single individual, the bastard brother of the laird of Macgregor, who amused himself with this second massacre of the innocents, in express disobedience to the chief, by whom he was left their guardian during the pursuit of the Colquhouns. It is added, that Macgregor bitterly lamented this atrocious action, and prophesied the ruin which it must bring upon their ancient clan. The following account of the conflict, which is indeed drawn up by a friend of the clan Gregor, is altogether silent on the murder of the youths. "In the spring of the year 1602, there happened great dissentions and troubles between the laird of Luss, chief of the Colquhouns, and Alexander, laird of Macgregor. The original of these quarrels proceeded from injuries and provocations mutually given and received, not long before. Macgregor, however, wanting to have them ended in friendly conferences, marched at the head of two hundred of his clan, to Leven, which borders on Luss, his country, with a view of settling matters by the mediation of friends: But Luss had no such intentions, and projected his measures with a different view; for he privately drew together a body of 300 horse and 500 foot, composed partly of his own clan and their followers, and partly of the Buchanans, his neighbours, and resolved to cut off Macgregor and his party to a man, in case the issue of the conference did not answer his inclination. But matters fell otherwise than he expected: and though Macgregor had previous information of his insidious design, yet, dissembling his resentment, he kept the appointment, and parted good friends in appearance.

"No sooner was he gone, than Luss, thinking to surprise him and his party in full security, and without any dread or apprehension of his treachery, followed with all speed, and came up with him at a place called Glenfroon. Macgregor, upon the alarm, divided his men into two parties, the greatest part whereof he commanded himself, and the other he committed to the care of his brother John, who, by his orders, led them about another way, and attacked the Colquhouns in flank. Here it was fought with great bravery on both sides for a considerable time; and, notwithstanding the vast disproportion of numbers, Macgregor, in the end, obtained an absolute victory. So great was the rout, that 200 of the Colquhouns were left dead upon the spot, most of the leading men were killed, and a multitude of prisoners taken. But what seemed most surprising and incredible in this defeat, was, that none of the Macgregors were missing, except John, the laird's brother, and one common fellow, though indeed many of them were wounded."—Professor Ross's *History of the family of Sutherland*, 1631.

The consequences of the battle of Glen Fruin were very calamitous to the family of Macgregor, who had already been considered as an unruly clan. The widows of the slain Colquhouns, sixty, it is said, in number, appeared in doleful procession before the king at Stirling, each riding upon a white palfrey, and bearing in her hand the bloody shirt of her husband displayed upon a pike. James VI was so much moved by the complaints of this "choir of mournful dames," that he let loose his vengeance against the Macgregors, without either bounds or moderation. The very name of the clan was proscribed, and those by whom it had been borne were given up to sword and fire, and absolutely hunted down by blood-hounds like wild beasts. Argyle and the Campbells, on the one hand, Montrose, with the Græmes and Buchanans, on the other, are said to have been the chief instruments in suppressing this devoted clan. The laird of Macgregor surrendered to the former on condition that he would take him out of Scottish ground. But, to use Birrel's expression, he kept "a highlandman's promise;" and, although he fulfilled his word to the letter by carrying him as far as Berwick, he afterwards brought him back to Edinburgh, where he was executed with eighteen of his clan.—*Birrel's Diary*, 2d October, 1603. The clan Gregor being thus driven to utter despair, seem to have renounced the laws, from the benefit of which they were excluded, and their depredations produced new acts of council, confirming the severity of their proscription, which had only the effect of rendering them still more united and desperate. It is a most extraordinary proof of the ardent and invincible spirit of clanship, that, notwithstanding the repeated proscriptions providently ordained by the legislature "for the *timeous preventing* the disorders and oppression that may fall out by the said name and clan of Macgregors and their followers," they were, in 1715 and 1745, a potent clan, and continue to subsist as a distinct and numerous race.

14. ——The king's vindictive pride
Boasts to have tamed the border side.—P. 134.

In 1529, James V made a convention, at Edinburgh, for the purpose of considering the best mode of quelling the border robbers, who, during the license of his minority, and the troubles which followed, had committed many exorbitancies. Accordingly, he assembled a flying army of ten thousand men, consisting of his principal nobility and their followers, who were directed to bring their hawks and dogs with them, that the monarch might refresh himself with sport during the intervals of military execution. With this array he swept through Ettrick forest, where he hanged over the gate of his own castle, Piers Cockburn, of Henderland, who had prepared, according to tradition, a feast for his reception. He caused Adam Scott of Tushielaw also to be executed, who was distinguished by the title of king of the border. But the most noted victim of justice, during that expedition, was John Armstrong of Gilnockie, famous in Scottish song, who, confiding in his own supposed innocence, met the king, with a retinue of thirty-six persons, all of whom were hanged at Carlenrig, near the source of the Teviot. The effect of this severity was such, that, as the vulgar expressed it, "the rush bush kept the cow," and "thereafter was great peace and rest a long time, wherethrough the king had great profit; for he had ten thousand sheep going in the Ettrick forest in keeping by Andrew Bell, who made the king as good count of them as they had gone in the bounds of Fife."—*Pitscottie's History, p.* 153.

15. What grace for highland chiefs judge ye,
By fate of border chivalry.—P. 134.

James was, in fact, equally attentive to restrain rapine and feudal oppression in every part of his dominions. "The king passed to the isles, and there held justice courts, and punished both

thief and traitor according to their demerit. And also he caused great men to show their holdings, wherethrough he found many of the said lands in non-entry; the which he confiscated and brought home to his own use, and afterwards annexed them to the crown, as ye shall hear. Syne brought many of the great men of the isles captive with him, such as Mudyart, M'Connel, M'Loyd of the Lewes, M'Neil, M'Lane, M'Intosh, John Mudyard, M'Kay, M'Kenzie, with many others that I cannot rehearse at this time. Some of them he put in ward, and some in court, and some he took pledges for good rule in time coming. So he brought the isles both north and south, in good rule and peace; wherefore he had great profit, service, and obedience of people a long time thereafter, and as long as he had the heads of the country in subjection, they lived in great peace and rest, and there was great riches and policy by the king's justice."—PITSCOTTIE, p. 152.

16. Rest safe till morning;—pity 'twere
Such cheek should feel the midnight air.—P. 136.

Hardihood was in every respect so essential to the character of a highlander, that the reproach of effeminacy was the most bitter which could be thrown upon him. Yet it was sometimes hazarded on what we might presume to think slight grounds. It is reported of old sir Ewing Cameron of Lochiel, when upwards of seventy, that he was surprised by night on a hunting or military expedition. He wrapped him in his plaid, and lay contentedly down upon the snow, with which the ground happened to be covered. Among his attendants, who were preparing to take their rest in the same manner, he observed that one of his grandsons, for his better accommodation, had rolled a large snowball, and placed it below his head. The wrath of the ancient chief was awakened by a symptom of what he conceived to be degenerate luxury. "Out upon thee," said he, kicking the frozen bolster from the head which it supported, "art thou so effeminate as to need a pillow?" The officer of engineers, whose curious letters from the highlands have been more than once quoted, tells a similar story of Macdonald of Keppoch, and subjoins the following remarks:

"This and many other stories are romantic; but there is one thing, that at first thought might seem very romantic, of which I have been credibly assured, that when the highlanders are constrained to lie among the hills, in cold dry windy weather, they sometimes soak the plaid in some river or burn, (*i. e.* brook;) and then, holding up a corner of it a little above their heads, they turn themselves round and round, till they are enveloped by the whole mantle. They then lay themselves down on the heath, upon the leward side of some hill, where the wet and the warmth of their bodies make a steam, like that of a boiling kettle. The wet, they say, keeps them warm by thickening the stuff, and keeping the wind from penetrating.

"I must confess I should have been apt to question this fact, had I not frequently seen them wet from morning to night; and, even at the beginning of the rain, not so much as stir a few yards to shelter, but continue in it, without necessity, till they were, as we say, wet through and through. And that is soon effected by the looseness and sponginess of the plaiding; but the bonnet is frequently taken off, and wrung like a dishclout, and then put on again.

"They have been accustomed from their infancy to be often wet, and to take the water like spaniels, and this is become a second nature, and can scarcely be called a hardship to them, insomuch that I used to say, they seemed to be of the duck-kind, and to love water as well. Though I never saw this preparation for sleep in windy weather, yet, setting out early in a morning from one of the huts, I have seen the marks of their lodging, where the ground has been free from rime or snow, which remained all round the spot where they had lain."—*Letters from Scotland.* Lond. 1754, 8vo. ii, p. 108.

17. ——his henchman came.—P. 136.

"This officer is a sort of secretary, and is to be ready, upon all occasions, to venture his life in defence of his master; and at drinking-bouts he stands behind his seat, at his haunch, from whence his title is derived, and watches the conversation, to see if any one offends his patron.

"An English officer being in company with a certain chieftain, and several other highland gentlemen, near Killichumen, had an argument with the *great man;* and both being well warmed with usky, at last the dispute grew very hot.

"A youth who was henchman, not understanding one word of English, imagined his chief was insulted, and thereupon drew his pistol from his side, and snapped it at the officer's head; but the pistol missed fire, otherwise it is more than probable he might have suffered death from the hand of that little vermin.

"But it is very disagreeable to an Englishman over a bottle, with the highlanders, to see every one of them have his gilly, that is, his servant, standing behind him all the while, let what will be the subject of conversation."—*Letters from Scotland,* ii, 159.

NOTES TO CANTO III.

1. And while the fiery cross glanced, like a meteor, round. P. 136.

When a chieftain designed to summon his clan, upon any sudden or important emergency, he slew a goat, and, making a cross of any light wood, seared its extremities in the fire, and extinguished them in the blood of the animal. This was called the *Fiery Cross*, also *Crean Tarigh*, or the *Cross of Shame*, because disobedience to what the symbol implied, inferred infamy. It was delivered to a swift and trusty messenger, who ran full speed with it to the next hamlet, where he presented it to the principal person, with a single word implying the place of rendezvous. He who received the symbol was bound to send it forward, with equal despatch, to the next village; and thus it passed with incredible celerity through all the district which owed allegiance to the chief, and also among his allies and neighbours, if the danger was common to them. At sight of the fiery cross, every man, from sixteen years old to sixty, capable of bearing arms, was obliged instantly to repair, in his best arms and accoutrements, to the place of rendezvous. He who failed to appear suffered the extremities of fire and sword, which were emblematically denounced to the disobedient by the bloody and burnt marks upon this warlike signal. During the civil war of 1745-6, the fiery cross often made its circuit; and upon one occasion it passed through the whole district of Breadalbane, a tract of thirty-two miles, in three hours. The late Alexander Stewart, esq. of Invernahyle, described

to me his having sent round the fiery cross through the district of Appine, during the same commotion. The coast was threatened by a descent from two English frigates, and the flower of the young men were with the army of prince Charles Edward, then in England: yet the summons was so effectual, that even old age and childhood obeyed it: and a force was collected in a few hours, so numerous and so enthusiastic, that all attempt at the intended diversion upon the country of the absent warriors was in prudence abandoned, as desperate.

This practice, like some others, is common to the highlanders with the ancient Scandinavians, as will appear by the following extract from Olaus Magnus:

"When the enemy is upon the sea-coast, or within the limits of northern kingdomes, then presently, by the command of the principal governours, with the counsel and consent of the old soldiers, who are notably skilled in such like business, a staff of three hands length, in the common sight of them all, is carried, by the speedy running of some active young man, unto that village or city, with this command,—that on the 3, 4, or 8, day, one, two, or three, or else every man in particular, from 15 years old, shall come with his arms, and expences for ten or twenty days, upon pain that his or their houses shall be burnt, (which is intimated by the burning of the staff,) or else the master to be hanged, (which is signified by the cord tied to it,) to appear speedily on such a bank, or field, or valley, to hear the cause he is called, and to hear orders from the said provincial governours what he shall do. Wherefore that messenger, swifter than any post or waggon, having done his commission, comes slowly back again, bringing a token with him that he hath done all legally: and every moment one or another runs to every village, and tells those places what they must do."

——"The messengers, therefore, or the footmen, that are to give warning to the people to meet for the battail, run fiercely and swiftly; for no snow, or rain, nor heat can stop them, nor night hold them; but they will soon run the race they undertake. The first messenger tells it to the next village, and that to the next; and so the hubbub runs all over till they all know it in that stift or territory, where, when, and wherefore they must meet."
—Olaus Magnus' *History of the Goths*, Englished by J. S. Lond. 1658, book iv, chap. 3, 4.

2. That monk, of savage form and face.—P. 137.

The state of religion in the middle ages afforded considerable facilities for those whose mode of life excluded them from regular worship, to secure, nevertheless, the ghostly assistance of confessors, perfectly willing to adapt the nature of their doctrine to the necessities and peculiar circumstances of their flock. Robin Hood, it is well known, had his celebrated domestic chaplain, friar Tuck. And that same curtal friar was probably matched in manners and appearance by the ghostly fathers of the Tynedale robbers, who are thus described in an excommunication fulminated against their patrons by Richard Fox, bishop of Durham, tempore Henrici VIII. "We have further understood, that there are many chaplains in the said territories of Tynedale and Redesdale, who are public and open maintainers of concubinage, irregular, suspended, excommunicated, and interdicted persons, and withal so utterly ignorant of letters, that it has been found by those who objected this to them, that there were some who, having celebrated mass for ten years, were still unable to read the sacramental service. We have also understood there are persons among them who, although not ordained, do take upon them the offices of priesthood; and, in contempt of God, celebrate the divine and sacred rites, and administer the sacraments, not only in sacred and dedicated places, but in those which are prophane and interdicted, and most wretchedly ruinous; they themselves being attired in ragged, torn, and most filthy vestments, altogether unfit to be used in divine, or even in temporal offices. The which said chaplains do administer sacraments and sacramental rites to the aforesaid manifest and infamous thieves, robbers, depredators, receivers of stolen goods, and plunderers, and that without restitution, or intention to restore, as evinced by the fact; and do also openly admit them to the rites of ecclesiastical sepulchre, without exacting security for restitution, although they are prohibited from doing so by the sacred canons, as well as by the institutes of the saints and fathers. All which infers the heavy peril of their own souls, and is a pernicious example to the other believers in Christ, as well as no slight, but an aggravated injury to the numbers despoiled and plundered of their goods, gear, herds, and chattels."*

To this lively and picturesque description of the confessors and churchmen of predatory tribes, there may be added some curious particulars respecting the priests attached to the several septs of native Irish, during the reign of queen Elizabeth. These friars had indeed to plead, that the incursions, which they not only pardoned, but even encouraged, were made upon those hostile to them, as well in religion as from national antipathy. But by protestant writers they are uniformly alleged to be the chief instruments of Irish insurrection, the very well-spring of all rebellion towards the English government. Lithgow, the Scottish traveller, declares the Irish wood-kerne, or predatory tribes, to be but the hounds of their hunting priests, who directed their incursions by their pleasure, partly for sustenance, partly to gratify animosity, partly to foment general division, and always for the better security and easier domination of the friars.† Derrick, the liveliness and minuteness of whose descriptions may frequently apologise for his doggrel verses, after describing an Irish feast, and the encouragement given by the songs of the bards, to its termination in an incursion upon the parts of the country more immediately under the dominion of the English, records the no less powerful arguments used by the friar to excite their animosity:

> And more t' augment the flame,
> and rancour of their harte,
> The friar, of his counsells vile,
> to rebelles doth imparte,
> Affirming that it is
> an almose deede to God,
> To make the English subjects taste
> the Irish rebells rodde.
> To spoile, to kill, to burne,
> this friar's counsell is;

* The Monition against the robbers of Tynedale and Redesdale, with which I was favoured by my friend, Mr. Surtees, of Mainsforth, may be found in the original Latin, in the Appendix to the Introduction to the Border Minstrelsy, No. vii, fourth edition.

† Lithgow's Travels, first edit. p. 431.

And for the doing of the same,
he warrantes heavenlie blisse.
He tells a holie tale;
the white he turnes to blacke;
And through the pardons in his male,
he workes a knavishe knacke.

The wreckful invasion of a part of the English pale is then described with some spirit; the burning of houses, driving off cattle, and all pertaining to such predatory inroads, is illustrated by a rude cut. The defeat of the Irish by a party of English soldiers from the next garrison, is then commemorated, and in like manner adorned with an engraving, in which the friar is exhibited mourning over the slain chieftain; or, as the rubric expresses it,

The friar then, that treacherous knave, with ough oughone lament,
To see his cousin devill's-son to have so foul event.

The matter is handled at great length in the text, of which the following verses are more than sufficient sample:—

The frier seying this,
lamentes that lucklesse parte,
And curseth to the pitte of hell
the death man's sturdie harte:
Yet for to quight them with
the frier taketh paine,
For all the symnes that ere he did
remission to obtaine.
And therefore serves his booke,
the candell and the bell;
But thinke you that suche apishe toies
bring damned souls from hell?
It 'longs not to my parte
infernal things to knowe;
But I beleve till later daie,
thei rise not from belowe.
Yet hope that friers give
to this rebellious rout,
If that their souls should chaunee in hell,
to bringe them quickly out,
Doeth make them lead suche lives,
as neither God nor man,
Without revenge for their desartes,
permitte to suffer can.
Thus friers are the cause,
the fountain and the spring,
Of hurleburls in this lande,
of eche unhappie thing.
Thei cause him to rebell
against their soveraigne queene,
And through rebellion often tymes,
their lives doe vanishe clene.
So as by friers' meanes,
in whom all follie swimme,
The Irishe karne doe often lose
the life, with hedde and limme.*

As the Irish tribes, and those of the Scottish highlands, are much more intimately allied, by language, manners, dress, and customs, than the antiquaries of either country have been willing to admit, I flatter myself I have here produced a strong warrant for the character sketched in the text. The following picture, though of a different kind, serves to establish the existence of ascetic religionists, to a comparatively late period, in the highlands and Western Isles. There is a great deal of simplicity in the description, for which, as for much similar information, I am obliged to Dr. John Martin, who visited the Hebrides at the suggestion of sir Robert Sibbald, a Scottish antiquarian of eminence, and early in the eighteenth century published a description of them, which procured him admission into the royal society. He died in London about 1719. His work is a strange mixture of learning, observation, and gross credulity.

"I remember," says this author, "I have seen an old lay-capuchin here, (in the island of Benbecula,) called in their language *brahir-bocht*, that is *poor brother;* which is literally true; for he answers this character, having nothing but what is given him: he holds himself fully satisfied with food and raiment, and lives in as great simplicity as any of his order; his diet is very mean, and he drinks only fair water: his habit is no less mortifying than that of his brethren elsewhere; he wears a short coat, which comes no farther than his middle, with narrow sleeves like a waisteoat: he wears a plad above it, girt about the middle, which reaches to his knee: the plad is fastened on his breast with a wooden pin, his neck bare, and his feet often so too: he wears a hat for ornament, and the string about it is a bit of a fisher's line, made of horse-hair. This plad he wears instead of a gown worn by those of his order in other countries. I told him he wanted the flaxen girdle that men of his order usually wear: he answered me, that he wore a leather one, which was the same thing. Upon the matter, if he is spoke to when at meat, he answers again; which is contrary to the custom of his order. This poor man frequently diverts himself with angling of trouts; he lies upon straw, and has no bell (as others have) to call him to his devotion, but only his conscience, as he told me." —Martin's *description of the Western Islands*, p. 82.

3. Of Brian's birth strange tales were told.—P. 137.

The legend which follows is not of the author's invention. It is possible he may differ from modern critics, in supposing that the records of human superstition, if peculiar to, and characteristic of, the country in which the scene is laid, are a legitimate subject of poetry. He gives, however, a ready assent to the narrower proposition, which condemns all attempts of an irregular and disordered fancy to excite terror, by accumulating a train of fantastic and incoherent horrors, whether borrowed from all countries, and patched upon a narrative belonging to one which knew them not, or derived from the author's own imagination.

In the present case, therefore, I appeal to the record which I have transcribed, with the variation of a very few words, from the geographical collections made by the laird of Macfarlane. I know not whether it be necessary to remark, that the miscellaneous concourse of youths and maidens on the night and on the spot where the miracle is said to have taken place, might, even in a credulous age, have somewhat diminished the wonder which accompanied the conception of Gilli-Doir-Magrevollich.

"There is bot two myles from Inverloghie, the church of Kilmalee, in Loghyeld. In ancient times there was ane church builded upon ane hill, which was above this church, which doeth now stand in this toune; and ancient men doeth say, that there was a battel foughten on ane little hill not the tenth part of a myle from this church, be certaine men which they did not know what they were. And long time thereafter, certaine herds of that toune, and of the next toune, called Unnatt, both wenches and youthes, did on a tyme conveen with others on that hill; and the day being somewhat cold, did gather the bones of the dead men that were slayne

* This curious picture of Ireland was inserted by the author in the republication of Somers' Tracts, vol. i, in which the plates have been also inserted, from the only impressions known to exist, belonging to the copy in the Advocates' library. See Somers' Tracts, vol. i, pp. 591, 594.

long time before in that place, and did make a fire to warm them. At last they did all remove from the fire, except one maid or wench, which was verie cold, and she did remain there for a space. She being quyetlie her alone, without any other companie, took up her clothes above her knees, or thereby, to warm her; a wind did come and caste the ashes upon her, and she was conceived of ane man-child. Several tymes thereafter she was verie sick, and at last she was knowne to be with chyld. And then her parents did ask at her the matter heiroff, which the wench could not weel answer which way to satisfie them. At last she resolved them with ane answer. As fortune fell upon her concerning this marvellous miracle, the chyld being borne, his name was called *Gili-doir Maghrevolich;* that is to say, the *black child, son to the bones.* So called, his grandfather sent him to school, and so he was a good schollar, and godlie. He did build this church which doeth now stand in Lochyeld, called Kilmalie."—MACFARLANE, *ut supra*, ii, 188.

4. Yet ne'er again to braid her hair
The virgin snood did Alice wear.—P. 137.

The snood, or ribbon, with which a Scottish lass braided her hair, had an emblematical signification, and applied to her maiden character. It was exchanged for the *curch*, *toy*, or coif, when she passed, by marriage, into the matron state. But if the damsel was so unfortunate as to lose pretensions to the name of maiden, without gaining a right to that of matron, she was neither permitted to use the snood, nor advance to the graver dignity of the curch. In old Scottish songs there occur many sly allusions to such misfortune, as in the old words to the popular tune of "Ower the muir amang the heather."

Down amang the broom, the broom,
Down amang the broom, my dearie,
The lassie lost her silken snood,
That gard her greet till she was wearie.

5. The desert gave him visions wild,
Such as might suit the spectre's child.—P. 137.

In adopting the legend concerning the birth of the founder of the church of Kilmalie, the author has endeavoured to trace the effects which such a belief was likely to produce, in a barbarous age, on the person to whom it related. It seems likely that he must have become a fanatic or an impostor, or that mixture of both which forms a more frequent character than either of them, as existing separately. In truth, mad persons are frequently more anxious to impress upon others a faith in their visions, than they are themselves confirmed in their reality: as, on the other hand, it is difficult for the most cool-headed impostor long to personate an enthusiast, without in some degree believing what he is so eager to have believed. It was a natural attribute of such a character as the supposed hermit, that he should credit the numerous superstitions with which the minds of ordinary highlanders are almost always embued. A few of these are slightly alluded to in this stanza. The river demon, or river-horse, for it is that form which he commonly assumes, is the kelpy of the lowlands, an evil and malicious spirit, delighting to forbode and to witness calamity. He frequents most highland lakes and rivers: and one of his most memorable exploits was performed upon the bank of Loch Vennachar, in the very district which forms the scene of our action: It consisted in the destruction of a funeral procession, with all its attendants. The "ndontide hag," called in Gaelic *glas-lich*, a tall, emaciated, gigantic female figure, is supposed in particular to haunt the district of Knoidart. A goblin dressed in antique armour, and having one hand covered with blood, called, from that circumstance, *Lham-dearg*, or red-hand, is a tenant of the forests of Glenmore and Rothiemurcus. Other spirits of the desert, all frightful in shape and malignant in disposition, are believed to frequent different mountains and glens of the highlands, where any unusual appearance, produced by mist, or the strange lights that are sometimes thrown upon particular objects, never fails to present an apparition to the imagination of the solitary and melancholy mountaineer.

6. The fatal Ben-Shie's boding scream.—P. 137.

Most great families in the highlands were supposed to have a tutelar, or rather a domestic spirit, attached to them, who took an interest in their prosperity, and intimated, by its wailings, an approaching disaster. That of Grant of Grant was called *May Mollach*, and appeared in the form of a girl, who had her arm covered with hair. Grant of Rothiemurcus had an attendant called *Bodach-an-dun*, or the ghost of the hill; and many other examples might be mentioned. The Ban-Schie* implies a female fairy, whose lamentations were often supposed to precede the death of a chieftain of particular families. When she is visible, it is in the form of an old woman, with a blue mantle and streaming hair. A superstition of the same kind is, I believe, universally received by the inferior ranks of the native Irish.

The death of the head of a highland family is also sometimes supposed to be announced by a chain of lights of different colours, called *Dr'eug*, or death of the druid. The direction which it takes marks the place of the funeral.

7. Sounds, too, had come in midnight blast,
Of charging steeds, careering fast
Along Benharrow's shingly side,
Where mortal horseman ne'er might ride.—P. 137

A presage of the kind alluded to in the text, is still believed to announce death to the ancient highland family of M'Lean, of Lochbuy. The spirit of an ancestor slain in battle, is heard to gallop along a stony bank, and then to ride thrice around the family residence, ringing his fairy bridle, and thus intimating the approaching calamity. How easily the eye as well as the ear may be deceived upon such occasions, is evident from the stories of armies in the air, and other spectral phenomena with which history abounds. Such an apparition is said to have been witnessed upon the side of Southfell mountain, between Penrith and Keswick, upon the 23d June, 1744, by two persons, William Lancaster of Blakehills, and Daniel Stricket his servant, whose attestation to the fact, with a full account of the apparition, dated the 21st July, 1785, is printed in Clark's Survey of the Lakes. The apparition consisted of several troops of horse moving in regular order, with a steady rapid motion, making a curved sweep around the fell, and seeming to the spectators to disappear over the ridge of the mountain. Many persons witnessed this phenomenon, and observed the last, or last but one, of the supposed troop, occasionally

* In the first edition, this was erroneously explained as equivalent to *Ben Schichian*, or the head of the fairies.

leave his rank, and pass at a gallop to the front, when he resumed the same steady pace. This curious appearance, making the necessary allowance for imagination, may be perhaps sufficiently accounted for by optical deception.—*Survey of the Lakes*, p. 25.

Supernatural intimations of approaching fate are not, I believe, confined to highland families. Howell mentions having seen at a lapidary's, in 1632, a monumental stone, prepared for four persons of the name of Oxenham, before the death of each of whom, the inscription stated a white bird to have appeared and fluttered around the bed, while the patient was in the last agony.—*Familiar Letters*, edit. 1726, p. 247. Glanville mentions one family, the members of which received this solemn sign by music, the sound of which floated from the family residence, and seemed to die in a neighbouring wood; another, that of captain Wood of Bampton, to whom the signal was given by knocking. But the most remarkable instance of the kind, occurs in the MS. memoirs of lady Fanshaw, so exemplary for her conjugal affection. Her husband, sir Richard, and she, chanced, during their abode in Ireland, to visit a friend, the head of a sept, who resided in his ancient baronial castle, surrounded with a moat. At midnight, she was awakened by a ghastly and supernatural scream, and looking out of bed, beheld, by the moonlight, a female face and part of the form, hovering at the window. The distance from the ground, as well as the circumstance of the moat, excluded the possibility that what she beheld was of this world. The face was that of a young and rather handsome woman, but pale, and the hair, which was reddish, loose and dishevelled. The dress, which lady Fanshaw's terror did not prevent her remarking accurately, was that of the ancient Irish. This apparition continued to exhibit itself for some time, and then vanished with two shrieks similar to that which had first excited lady Fanshaw's attention. In the morning, with infinite terror, she communicated to her host what she had witnessed, and found him prepared not only to credit, but to account for the apparition. "A near relation of my family," said he, "expired last night in this castle. We disguised our certain expectation of the event from you, lest it should throw a cloud over the cheerful reception which was your due. Now, before such an event happens in this family and castle, the female spectre whom you have seen always is visible. She is believed to be the spirit of a woman of inferior rank, whom one of my ancestors degraded himself by marrying, and whom afterwards, to expiate the dishonour done his family, he caused to be drowned in the castle-moat."

8. Whose parents in Inch-Cailliach wave
Their shadows o'er Clan-Alpine's grave.—P. 133.

Inch-Cailliach, the Isle of Nuns, or of Old Women, is a most beautiful island at the lower extremity of Loch-Lomond. The church belonging to the former nunnery was long used as a place of worship for the parish of Buchanan, but scarce any vestiges of it now remain. The burial ground continues to be used, and contains the family places of sepulture of several neighbouring clans. The monuments of the lairds of Macgregor, and of other families, claiming a descent from the old Scottish king Alpine, are most remarkable. The highlanders are as jealous of their rights of sepulture, as may be expected from a people whose whole laws and government, if clanship can be called so, turned upon the single principle of family descent: "May his ashes be scattered on the water," was one of the deepest and most solemn imprecations which they used against an enemy.

9. ———the dun deer's hide
On fleeter foot was never tied.—P. 138.

The present *brogue* of the highlanders is made of half-dried leather, with holes to admit and let out the water; for walking the moors dry-shod, is a matter altogether out of question. The ancient buskin was still ruder, being made of undressed deer's hide, with the hair outwards, a circumstance which procured the highlanders the well-known epithet of *Redshanks*. The process is very accurately described by one Elder (himself a highlander) in the project for a union between England and Scotland, addressed to Henry VIII.

"We go a hunting; and after that we have slain red deer, we flay off the skin by and by, and setting of our bare-foot on the inside thereof, for want of cunning shoemakers, by your grace's pardon, we play the coblers, compassing and measuring so much thereof, as shall reach up to our ancles, pricking the upper part thereof with holes, that the water may repass where it enters, and stretching it up with a strong thong of the same above our said ancles. So, and please your noble grace, we make our shoes. Therefore, we using such manner of shoes, the rough hairy side outwards, in your grace's dominions of England, we be called *rough-footed Scots.*"—PINKERTON'S *History*, vol. ii, p. 397.

10. The dismal coronach.—P. 139.

The *coronach* of the highlanders, like the *ululatus* of the Romans, and the *ululoo* of the Irish, was a wild expression of lamentation, poured forth by the mourners over the body of a departed friend. When the words of it were articulate, they expressed the praises of the deceased, and the loss the clan would sustain by his death. The following is a lamentation of this kind, literally translated from the Gaelic, to some of the ideas of which the text stands indebted. The tune is so popular, that it has since become the war-march, or gathering of the clan.

Coronach on sir Lauchlan, chief of Maclean.

Which of all the Senachies
Can trace thy line from the root, up to paradise,
But Macvuirich, the son of Fergus?
No sooner had thine ancient stately tree
Taken firm root in Albion,
Than one of thy forefathers fell at Harlaw.—
'Twas then we lost a chief of deathless name!

'Tis no base weed—no planted tree,
Nor a seedling of last autumn;
Nor a saplin planted at Beltain;*
Wide, wide around were spread its lofty branches—
But the topmost bough is lowly laid!
Thou hast forsaken us before Sawaine.†

Thy dwelling is the winter house;—
Loud, sad, and mighty is thy death song!
Oh! courteous champion of Montrose!
Oh! stately warrior of the Celtic Isles!
Thou shalt buckle thy harness on no more!

The coronach has for some years past been superseded at funerals by the use of the bag-pipe; and that also is, like many other highland peculiarities, falling into disuse unless in remote districts.

11. Benledi saw the cross of fire,
It glanced like lightning up Strath-Ire.—P. 139.

A glance at the provincial map of Perthshire, or

* Bel's fire, or Whitsunday. † Halloween.

at any large map of Scotland, will trace the progress of the signal through the small district of lakes and mountains, which, in exercise of my poetical privilege, I have subjected to the authority of my imaginary chieftain; and which, at the period of my romance, was really occupied by a clan who claimed a descent from Alpine, a clan the most unfortunate, and most persecuted, but neither the least distinguished, least powerful, nor least brave, of the tribes of the Gael.

Slioch nor Sioghridh duchaisach
Bha-shios an Dun-Staiobhinish
Aig an roubh crun na Halba othus
'Stag a cheil duchas fast ris.

The first stage of the fiery cross is Duncraggan, a place near the Brigg of Turk, where a short stream divides Loch-Achray from Loch-Vennachar. From thence, it passes towards Callender, and then turning to the left up the pass of Lennie, is consigned to Norman at the chapel of St. Bride, which stood on a small romantic knoll in the middle of the valley, called Strath-Ire. Tombea and Arnandave, or Armandave, are names of places in the vicinity. The alarm is then supposed to pass along the lake of Lubnaig, and through the various glens in the district of Balquidder, including the neighbouring tracts of Glenfinlas and Strath-Gartney.

12. Not faster o'er thy heathery braes,
Balquidder, speeds the midnight blaze.—P. 140.

It may be necessary to inform the southern reader, that the heath on the Scottish moor-lands is often set fire to, that the sheep may have the advantage of the young herbage produced in room of the tough old heather plants. This custom (execrated by sportsmen) produces occasionally the most beautiful nocturnal appearances, similar almost to the discharge of a volcano. The simile is not new to poetry. The charge of a warrior, in the fine ballad of Hardyknute, is said to be "like a fire to heather set."

13. ——by his chieftain's hand.—P. 141.

The deep and implicit respect paid by the highland clansmen to their chief, rendered this both a common and a solemn oath. In other respects, they were like most savage nations, capricious in their ideas concerning the obligatory power of oaths. One solemn mode of swearing was by kissing the *dirk*, imprecating upon themselves death by that, or a similar weapon, if they broke their vow. But for oaths in the usual form, they are said to have had little respect. As for the reverence due to the chief, it may be guessed from the following odd example of the highland point of honour:

"The clan whereto the abovementioned tribe belongs, is the only one I have heard of, which is without a chief; that is, being divided into families, under several chieftains, without any particular patriarch of the whole name. And this is a great reproach, as may appear from an affair that fell out at my table, in the highlands, between one of that name and Cameron. The provocation given by the latter was—name your chief.—The return of it, at once, was,—You are a fool. They went out next-morning, but, having early notice of it, I sent a small party of soldiers after them, which, in all probability, prevented some barbarous mischief that might have ensued; for the chiefless highlander, who is himself a petty chieftain, was going to the place appointed with a small sword and pistol, whereas the Cameron (an old man) took with him only his broad-sword, according to agreement.

"When all was over, and I had, at least seemingly, reconciled them, I was told the words, of which I seemed to think but slightly, were, to one of the clan, the greatest of all provocations."—*Letters from the North of Scotland*, vol. ii, p. 221.

14. ——Coir-nan-Uriskin.—P. 141.

This is a very steep and most romantic hollow in the mountain of Ben-venue, overhanging the south-eastern extremity of Loch-Katrine. It is surrounded with stupendous rocks, and overshadowed with birch-trees, mingled with oaks, the spontaneous production of the mountain, even where its cliffs appear denuded of soil. A dale in so wild a situation, and amid a people whose genius bordered on the romantic, did not remain without appropriate deities. The name literally implies the Corri, or Den of the Wild or Shaggy Men. Perhaps this, as conjectured by Mr. Alexander Campbell,* may have originally only implied its being the haunt of a ferocious banditti. But tradition has ascribed to the *Urisk*, who gives name to the cavern, a figure between a goat and a man; in short, however much the classical reader may be startled, precisely that of the Grecian satyr. The *Urisk* seems not to have inherited, with the form, the petulance of the sylvan deity of the classics: his occupations, on the contrary, resembled those of Milton's Lubber Fiend, or of the Scottish Brownie, though he differed from both in name and appearance. "The *Urisks*," says Dr. Graham, "were a sort of lubberly supernaturals, who, like the Brownies, could be gained over by kind attention, to perform the drudgery of the farm, and it was believed that many of the families in the highlands had one of the order attached to it. They were supposed to be dispersed over the highlands, each in his own wild recess, but the solemn stated meetings of the order were regularly held in this cave of Ben-venue. This current superstition, no doubt, alludes to some circumstance in the ancient history of this country."—*Scenery on the Southern confines of Perthshire*, 1806, p. 19.

It must be owned that the *coir*, or den, does not, in its present state, meet our ideas of a subterraneous grotto, or cave, being only a small and narrow cavity, among huge fragments of rocks rudely piled together. But such a scene is liable to convulsions of nature, which a lowlander cannot estimate, and which may have choaked up what was originally a cavern. At least the name and tradition authorize the author of a fictitious tale to assert its having been such at the remote period in which the scene is laid.

15. ——the wild pass of Beal-nam-bo.—P. 141.

Bealach-nam-bo, or the pass of cattle, is a most magnificent glade, overhung with aged birch-trees, a little higher up the mountain than the Coir-nan-Uriskin, treated of in the last note. The whole composes the most sublime piece of scenery that imagination can conceive.

16. A single page, to bear his sword,
Alone attended on his lord.—P. 141.

A highland chief, being as absolute in his patriarchal authority as any prince, had a corresponding number of officers attached to his person. He had his body-guards, called *luicht-tach*, picked from his clan for strength, activity, and entire devotion to his person. These, according to their deserts, were sure to share abundantly in the rude profusion of his hospitality. It is recorded, for

* Journey from Edinburgh, 1802, p. 109.

example, by tradition, that Allan Maclean, chief of that clan, happened upon a time to hear one of these favourite retainers observe to his comrade, that their chief grew old—"Whence do you infer that?" replied the other. "When was it," rejoined the first, "that a soldier of Allans was obliged, as I am now, not only to eat the flesh from this bone, but even to tear off the inner skin, or filament?" The hint was quite sufficient, and Maclean next morning, to relieve his followers from such dire necessity, undertook an inroad on the mainland, the ravage of which altogether effaced the memory of his former expeditions for the like purpose.

Our officer of engineers, so often quoted, has given us a distinct list of the domestic officers who, independent of *Luicht-tach*, or *gardes du corps*, belonged to the establishment of a highland chief. These are, 1. *The Hench-man.* See these notes, p. 169. 2. *The Bard.* See p. 164. 3. *Bladier*, or spokesman. 4. *Gillie-more*, or sword-bearer, alluded to in the text. 5. *Gillie-casflue*, who carried the chief, if on foot, over the fords. 6. *Gillie-comstraine*, who leads the chief's horse. 7. *Gillie-trushanarinsh*, the baggage man. 8. The piper. 9. The piper's gillie, or attendant, who carries the bagpipe.* Although this appeared, naturally enough, very ridiculous to an English officer, who considered the master of such a retinue as no more than an English gentleman of 500*l.* a-year, yet in the circumstances of the chief, whose strength and importance consisted in the number and attachment of his followers, it was of the last consequence, in point of policy, to have in his gift subordinate officers, which called immediately round his person those who were most devoted to him, and, being of value in their estimation, were also the means of rewarding them.

NOTES TO CANTO IV.

1. The taghairm called; by which, afar,
Our sires foresaw the events of war.—P. 142.

The highlanders, like all rude people, had various superstitious modes of inquiring into futurity. One of the most noted was the *taghairm*, mentioned in the text. A person was wrapped up in the skin of a newly slain bullock, and deposited beside a water-fall, or at the bottom of a precipice, or in some other strange, wild, and unusual situation, where the scenery around him suggested nothing but objects of horror. In this situation, he revolved in his mind the question proposed, and whatever was impressed upon him by his exalted imagination passed for the inspiration of the disembodied spirits, who haunt these desolate recesses. In some of the Hebrides, they attributed the same oracular power to a large black stone by the sea-shore, which they approached with certain solemnities, and considered the first fancy which came into their own minds, after they did so, to be the undoubted dictate of the tutelar deity of the stone, and as such, to be, if possible, punctually complied with. Martin has recorded the following curious modes of highland augury, in which the taghairm, and its effects upon the person who was subjected to it, may serve to illustrate the text.

"It was an ordinary thing among the over-curious to consult an invisible oracle, concerning the fate of families and battles, &c. This was performed three different ways: the first was by a company of men, one of whom, being detached by lot, was afterwards carried to a river, which was the boundary between two villages; four of the company laid hold on him, and, having shut his eyes, they took him by the legs and arms, and then tossing him to and again, struck his hips with force against the bank. One of them cried out, What is it you have got here? another answers, A log of birch-wood. The other cries again, Let his invisible friends appear from all quarters, and let them relieve him by giving an answer to our present demands: and in a few minutes after, a number of little creatures came from the sea, who answered the question, and disappeared suddenly. The man was then set at liberty, and they all returned home, to take their measures according to the prediction of their false prophets; but the poor deluded fools were abused, for their answer was still ambiguous. This was always practised in the night, and may literally be called the works of darkness.

"I had an account from the most intelligent and judicious men in the Isle of Skie, that about sixty-two years ago, the oracle was thus consulted only once, and that was in the parish of Kilmartin, on the east side, by a wicked and mischievous race of people, who are now extinguished, both root and branch.

"The second way of consulting the oracle was by a party of men, who first retired to solitary places, remote from any house, and there they singled out one of their number, and wrapt him in a big cow's hide, which they folded about him; his whole body was covered with it except his head, and so left in this posture all night, until his invisible friends relieved him, by giving a proper answer to the question in hand; which he received, as he fancied, from several persons that he found about him all that time. His consorts returned to him at the break of day, and then he communicated his news to them; which often proved fatal to those concerned in such unwarrantable inquiries.

"There was a third way of consulting, which was a confirmation of the second above mentioned. The same company who put the man into the hide, took a live cat and put him on a spit; one of the number was employed to turn the spit, and one of his consorts inquired of him, what are you doing? he answered, I roast this cat, until his friends answer the question; which must be the same that was proposed by the man shut up in the hide. And afterwards a very big cat* comes, attended by a number of lesser cats, desiring to relieve the cat turned upon the spit, and then answers the question. If this answer proved the same that was given to the man in the hide, then it was taken as a confirmation of the other, which, in this case, was believed infallible.

"Mr. Alexander Cooper, present minister of North-Visit, told me that one John Erach, in the Isle of Lewis, assured him, it was his fate to have been led by his curiosity with some who consulted this oracle, and that he was a night within the hide, as above mentioned; during which time he felt and heard such terrible things, that he could not express them; the impression it made on him was such as could never go off, and he said for a thousand worlds he would never again be concerned in the like performance, for this had disordered

* Letters from Scotland, vol. ii, p. 15.

* The reader may have met with the story of the "King of the Cats," in lord Lyttleton's Letters. It is well known in the highlands as a nursery tale.

him to a high degree. He confessed it ingenuously, and with an air of great remorse, and seemed to be very penitent under a just sense of so great a crime; he declared this about five years since, and is still living in the Lewis for any thing I know."—*Description of the Western Isles*, p. 110. See also *Pennant's Scottish Tour*, vol. ii, p. 361.

2. The choicest of the prey we had,
When swept our merry-men Gallangad.—P. 142.

I know not if it be worth observing, that this passage is taken almost literally from the mouth of an old highland Kerne, or Ketteran, as they were called. He used to narrate the merry doings of the good old time when he was follower of Rob Roy Macgregor. This leader, on one occasion, thought proper to make a descent upon the lower part of the Loch-Lomond district, and summoned all the heritors and farmers to meet at the kirk of Drymen, to pay him black-mail, *i. e.* tribute for forbearance and protection. As this invitation was supported by a band of thirty or forty stout fellows, only one gentleman, an ancestor, if I mistake not, of the present Mr. Grahame, of Gartmore, ventured to decline compliance. Rob Roy instantly swept his land of all he could drive away, and among the spoil was a bull of the old Scottish wild breed, whose ferocity occasioned great pleasure to the Ketterans. "But ere we had reached the Row of Dennan," said the old man, "a child might have scratched his ears." The circumstance is a minute one, but it paints the times when the poor beeve was compelled

To hoof it o'er as many weary miles,
With goading pikemen hollowing at his heels,
As e'er the bravest antler of the woods.
Ethwald.

3. ——that huge cliff, whose ample verge
Tradition calls the Hero's Targe.—P. 143.

There is a rock so named in the forest of Glenfinlas, by which a tumultuary cataract takes its course. This wild place is said in former times to have afforded refuge to an outlaw, who was supplied with provisions by a woman, who lowered them down from the brink of the precipice above. His water he procured for himself by letting down a flagon tied to a string, into the black pool beneath the fall.

4. Or raven on the blasted oak,
That, watching while the deer is broke,
His morsel claims with sullen croak.—P. 143.

Every thing belonging to the chase was matter of solemnity among our ancestors; but nothing was more so than the mode of cutting up, or, as it was technically called, *breaking* the slaughtered stag. The forester had his allotted portion; the hounds had a certain allowance: and, to make the division as general as possible, the very birds had their share also. "There is a little gristle," says Tuberville, "which is upon the spoone of the brisket, which we call the raven's bone; and I have seen in some places a raven so wont and accustomed to it, that she would never fail to croak and cry for it all the time you were in breaking up of the deer, and would not depart till she had it." In the very ancient metrical romance of sir Tristrem, that peerless knight, who is said to have been the very deviser of all rules of chase, did not omit this ceremony:—

"The raven he yaf his yiftes
Sat on the fourched tree."
Sir Tristrem, 2d ed. p. 34.

The raven might also challenge his rights by the book of saint Albans; for thus says dame Juliana Berners:—

——————Slitteth anon
The bely to the side from the corbyn bone;
That is corbin's fee, at the death he will be.

Jonson, in "The Sad Shepherd," gives a more poetical account of the same ceremony:

Marian.—He that undoes him,
Doth cleave the brisket bone, upon the spoon
Of which a little gristle grows—you call it—
Robin Hood.—The raven's bone.
Marian.————Now o'er head sat a raven
On a sere bough, a grown, great bird and hoarse,
Who, all the time the deer was breaking up,
So croaked and cried for it, as all the huntsmen,
Especially old Scathlocke, thought it ominous.

5. Which spills the foremost foeman's life,
That party conquers in the strife.—P. 143.

Though this be in the text described as a response of the taghairm, or Oracle of the Hide, it was of itself an augury frequently attended to. The fate of the battle was often anticipated in the imagination of the combatants, by observing which party first shed blood. It is said that the highlanders under Montrose were so deeply imbued with this notion, that on the morning of the battle of Tippermoor, they murdered a defenceless herdsman, whom they found in the fields, merely to secure an advantage of so much consequence to their party.

6. Alice Brand.—P. 144.

This little fairy tale is founded upon a very curious Danish ballad, which occurs in the *Kiempe Viser*, a collection of heroic songs, first published in 1591, and reprinted in 1695, inscribed by Anders Safrensen, the collector and editor, to Sophia, queen of Denmark. I have been favoured with a literal translation of the original, by my learned friend, Mr. Robert Jamieson, whose deep knowledge of Scandinavian antiquities will, I hope, one day be displayed in illustration of the history of Scottish ballad and song, for which no man possesses more ample materials. The story will remind the readers of the Border Minstrelsy of the tale of Young Tamlane. But this is only a solitary and not very marked instance of coincidence, whereas several of the other ballads in the same collection, find exact counterparts in the *Kiempe Viser*. Which may have been the originals, will be a question for future antiquarians. Mr. Jamieson, to secure the power of literal translation, has adopted the old Scottish idiom, which approaches so near to that of the Danish, as almost to give word for word, as well as line for line, and indeed in many verses the orthography alone is altered. As *Wester Haf*, mentioned in the first stanza of the ballad, means the *West Sea*, in opposition to the Baltic, or *East Sea*, Mr. Jamieson inclines to be of opinion, that the scene of the disenchantment is laid in one of the Orkney, or Hebride Islands. To each verse in the original is added a burden, having a kind of meaning of its own, but not applicable, at least not uniformly applicable, to the sense of the stanza to which it is subjoined: this is very common both in Danish and Scottish song.

THE ELFIN GRAY.

Translated from the Danish Kæmpe Viser, p. 143, and first published in 1591.

Der ligger an vold i Vester Haf,
Der agter en bondè at biggè:
Hand forer did baadè hög og hund,
Og agter dar om vinteren at liggè.
(De vilde diur og diurene udi scofven.)

1.
There liggs a wold in Wester Haf,
There a husbande means to bigg,
And thither he carries baith hawk and hound,
There meaning the winter to ligg.
(The wild deer and daes i' the shaw-out.)

2.
He taks wi' him baith hound and cock,
The langer he means to stay,
The wild deer in the shaws that are
May sairly rue the day.
(The wild deer, &c.)

3.
He's hewed the beech, and he's felled the aik,
Sae has he the poplar gray:
And grim in mood was the grousome elf,
That he sae bald he may.

4.
He hewed him kipples, he hewed him bawks
Wi' mickle moil and haste;
Syne speered the elf in the knock that bade,
"Wha's haeking here sae fast?"

5.
Syne up and spak the weiest elf,
Creaned es an immert sma:
"It's here is come a Christian man
I'll fley him or he ga."

6.
It's up syne started the firsten elf,
And glowred about sae grim:
"It's we'll awa' to the husbande's house,
And hald a court on him.

7.
"Here hews he down baith skugg and shaw,
And wirks us skaith and scorn:
His huswife he shall gie to me,
They's rue the day they were born!"

8.
The elfen a' i' the knock that were
Gaed daneing in a string:
They nighed near the husbande's house:
Sae lang their tails did hing.

9.
The hound he yowls i' the yard:
The herd touts in his horn;
The earn scraichs, and the cock craws,
As the husbande had gi'en him his corn.*

10.
The elfen were five score and seven,
Sae laidly and sae grim;
And they the husbande's guests maun be,
To eat and drink wi' him.

11.
The husbande out o' Villenshaw
At his winnock the elves can see;
"Help me, now, Jesu, Mary's son;
Thir elves they mint at me!"

12.
In every nook a cross he coost,
In his chalmer maist ava:
The elfen a' were fleyed thereat,
And flew to the wild-wood shaw.

13.
And some flew east, and some flew west,
And some to the norwart flew;
And some they flew to the deep dale down,
There still they are, I trow.†

14.
It was then the weiest elf,
In at the door braids he;
Agast was the husbande, for that elf
For cross nor sign wad flee.

15.
The huswife she was a canny wife,
She set the elf at the board;
She set afore him baith ale and meat,
Wi' mony a well-waled word.

16.
"Hear thou, Gudeman o' Villenshaw,
What now I say to thee;
Wha bade thee bigg within our bounds,
Without the leave o' me?

17.
"But, an thou in our bounds will bigg,
And bide, as well as may be,
Then thou thy dearest huswife maun
To me for a lemman gie."

18.
Up spak the luckless husbande then,
As God the grace him gae:
"Eline she is to me sae dear,
Her thou may nagate hae."

19.
Till the elf he answered as he couth:
"Lat but my huswife be,
And tak whate'er o' gude or gear
Is mine, awa wi' thee."

20.
"Then I'll thy Eline tak, and thee
Aneath my feet to tread;
And hide thy goud and white monie
Aneath my dwalling stead."

21.
The husbande and his household a'
In sary rede they join:
"Far better that she be now forfairn,
Nor that we a' should tyne."

22.
Up, will of rede, the husbande stood
Wi' heart fu' sad and sair:
And he has gi'en his huswife Eline
Wi' the young elf to fare.

23.
Then blyth grew he, and sprang about;
He took her in his arm;
The rud it left her comely cheek;
Her heart was elemed wi' harm.

24.
A waefu' woman then she was ane,
And the moody tears loot fa':
"God rew on me, unseely wife,
How hard a wierd I fa'!

25.
"My fay I plight to the fairest wight
That man on mold mat see;
Maun I now mell wi' a laidly el,
His light lemman to be?"

26.
He minted ance—he minted twice,
Wae waxed her heart that syth;
Syne the laidliest fiend he grew that e'er
To mortal ee did kyth.

27.
When he the thirden time can mint,
To Mary's son she prayed,
And the laidly elf was clean awa,
And a fair knight in his stead.

28.
This fell under a linden green,
That again his shape he found;
O' wae and care was the word nae mair,
A' were sae glad that stound.

29.
"O dearest Eline, hear thou this,
And thow my wife sal be,
And a' the goud in merry England
Sae freely I'll gie thee!

30.
"Whan I was a little wee bairn,
My mither died me frae;
My stepmither sent me awa frae her:
And turned till an *elfin gray*.

31.
"To thy husband I a gift will gie,
Wi' mickle state and gear,
As mends for Eline his huswife;
Thou's be my heartis dear."

32.
"Thou nobil knyght, we thank now God
That has freed us frae skaith;

---

* This singular quatrain stands thus in the original:
"Hunden hand gior i gaarden;
Hiorden tudè i sit horn;
Œrnen skriger, og hanen galer,
Som bonden hafdè gifvet sit korn."

† In the Danish:
"Sommè floyè oster, og sommè floyè vester,
Noglè flöyè nor paa;
Noglè floyè ned i dybenè dalè,
Jeg troer de erè der endnu."

Sae wed thou thee a maiden free,
And joy attend ye baith!

33.

"Syne I to thee na maik can be,
My dochter may be thine;
And thy gud will right to fulfil,
Lat this be our propine."

34.

"I thank thee, Eline, thou wise woman;
My praise thy worth shall hae;
And thy love gin I fail to win,
Thou here at hame shall stay."

35.

The husbande biggit now on his öe,
And nae ane wrought him wrang;
His dochter wore crown in Engeland
And happy lived and lang.

36.

Now Eline the husbande's huswife has
Cour'd a' her grief and harms;
She's mither to a noble queen
That sleeps in a kingis arms.

GLOSSARY.

St. 1. *Wold*, a wood; woody fastness.

Husbande, from the Dan. *hos*, with, and *bonde*, a villain, or bondsman, who was a cultivator of the ground, and could not quit the estate to which he was attached, without the permission of his lord. This is the sense of the word, in the old Scottish records. In the Scottish "Burghe laws," translated from the *Reg. Majest.* (Auchinleck MS. in the Adv. Lib.) it is used indiscriminately with the Dan. and Swed. *bondè*.

Bigg, build.

Ligg, lie.

Daes, does.

2. *Shaw*, wood.

Sairly, sorely.

3. *Aik*, oak.

Grousome, terrible.

Bald, bold.

4. *Kipples*, (couples) beams joined at the top, for supporting a roof, in building.

Bawks, balks; cross beams.

Moil, laborious industry.

Speer'd, asked.

Knock, hillock.

5. *Weiest*, smallest.

Crean'd, shrunk, diminished; from the Gaëlic, *crian*, very small.

Immert, emmit; ant.

Christian, used in the Danish ballads, &c. in contradistinction to *demoniac*, as it is in England, in contradistinction to *brute*; in which sense, a person of the lower class in England, would call a *Jew* or a *Turk*, a *Christian*.

Fley, frighten.

6. *Glowr'd*, stared.

Hald, hold.

7. *Skugg*, shade.

Skaith, harm.

8. *Nighed*, approached.

9. *Yowls*, howls.

Toots—in the Dan. *tude*, is applied both to the howling of a dog, and the sound of a horn.

Scraichs, screams.

10. *Laidly*, loathly; disgustingly *ugly*.

Grim, fierce.

11. *Winnock*, window.

Mint, aim at.

12. *Coost*, cast.

Chalmer, chamber.

Maist, most.

Ava, of all.

13. *Norwart*, northward.

Trow, believe.

14. *Braids*, strides quickly forward.

Wad, would.

15. *Canny*, adroit.

Mony, many.

Waled, well chosen.

17. *An*, if.

Bide, abide.

Lemman, Mistress.

18. *Nogate*, nowise.

19. *Couth*, could, knew how to.

Lat be, let alone.

Gude, goods; property.

20. *Aneath*, beneath.

Dwalling-stead, dwelling-place.

21. *Sary*, sorrowful.

Rede, counsel; consultation.

Forfairn, forlorn; lost; gone.

Tyne, (verb neut.) be lost; perish.

22. *Will of rede*, bewildered in thought; in the Danish original "*vildraadige:*" Lat. "inops *consilii;*" Gr. *απορων*. This expression is left among the *desiderata* in the Glossary to Ritson's romances, and has never been explained. It is obsolete in the Danish as well as in English.

Fare, go.

23. *Rud*, red of the cheek.

Clem'd, in the Danish, *klemt;* (which, in the north of England, is still in use, as the word *starved* is with us;) brought to a dying state. It is used by our old comedians.

Harm, grief; as in the original, and in the old Teutonic, English, and Scottish poetry.

24. *Waeful*, woeful.

Moody, strongly and wilfully passionate.

Rew, take ruth; pity.

Unseely, unhappy; unblest.

Weird, fate.

Fa, (Isl. Dan. and Swed.) take; get; acquire; procure; have for my lot.—This Gothic verb answers, in its direct and secondary significations, exactly to the Latin *capio;* and Allan Ramsay was right in his definition of it. It is quite a different word from *fa'*, an abbreviation of *fall*, or *befall*; and is the principal root in FANGEN, to *fang*, take, or lay hold of.

25. *Fay*, faith.

Mold, mould; earth.

Mat, mote; might.

Maun, must.

Mell, mix.

El, an elf. This term, in the Welch, signifies *what has in itself the power of motion; a moving principle; an intelligence; a spirit; an angel.* In the Hebrew, it bears the same import.

26. *Minted*, attempted; meant; showed a *mind*, or intention to. The original is:

"and *mindte* hende först
—og anden gang:—
Hun giordis i hiortet sa vee:
End blef hand den *ledis*te deifvel Mand kunde med oyen see.
Der hand vil de *minde* den tredie gang,"&c.

Syth, tide; time.

Kyth, appear.

28. *Stound*, hour; time; moment.

29. *Merry*, (old Teut. *meré*,) famous; renowned; answering, in its etymological meaning, exactly to the Latin *mactus*. Hence *merry-men*, as the address of a chief to his followers; meaning, not men of mirth, but of renown. The term is found in its original sense in the Gaël. *marà*, and the Welsh *mawr*, great; and in the oldest Teut. romances, *mar*, *mer*, and *meré*, have sometimes the same signification.

31. *Mends*, amends; recompense.

33. *Maik*, match; peer; equal.

Propine, pledge; gift.

35. *öe*, an island of the *second* magnitude; an island of the *first* magnitude being called a *land*, and one of the *third* magnitude a *holm*.

36. *Cour'd*, recovered.

THE GHAIST'S WARNING.

Translated from the Danish KæmpeViser, p. 721.

By the permission of Mr. Jamieson, this ballad is added from the same curious collection. It contains some passages of great pathos.

Svend Dyring hand rider sig op under öe,
(Varè jeg selver ung)
Der første hand sig saa ven en möe.
(Mig lyster udi lunden at ridè,) &c.

Child Dyring has ridden him up under öe,*
(And O gin I were young!)
There! wedded he him sae fairt a may.
(I' the greenwood it lists me to ride.)

Thegither they liv'd for seven lang year,
(And O, &c.)
And they seven bairns hae gotten in fere.
(I' the greenwood, &c.)

Sae death's come there intill that stead,
And that winsome lily flower is dead.

That swain he has ridden him up under öe,
And syne he has married anither may.

He's married a may, and he's fessen her hame;
But she was a grim and a laidly dame.

When into the castell court drave she,
The seven bairns stood wi' the tear in their ee.

The bairns they stood wi' dule and dout:
* * * * * *

Nor ale nor mead to the bairnies she gave;
"But hunger and hate frae me ye's have."

She took frae them the bowster blae,
And said, "Ye sall ligg i' the bare strae!"

She took frae them the groff wax light:
Says, "Now ye sall ligg i' the mark a' night!"

'Twas lang i' the night, and the bairnies grat;
Their mither she under the mools heard that;

That heard the wife under the eard that lay:
"Forsooth maun I to my bairnies gae!"

That wife can stand up at our lord's knee,
And "may I gang and my bairnies see?"

She prigged sae sair, and she prigged sae lang,
That he at the last gae her leave to gang.

"And thou sall come back when the cock does craw,
For thou no langer sall bide awa."

Wi' her banes sae stark, a bowt she gae;
She's riven baith wa' and marble gray.‡

Whan near to the dwalling she can gang,
The dogs they wow'd till the lift it rang.

When she came till the castell yett,
Her eldest dochter stood thereat.

"Why stand ye here, dear dochter mine?
How are sma brithers and sisters thine!"

"Forsooth ye're a woman baith fair and fine;
But ye are nae dear mither of mine."

"Och! how should I be fine or fair?
My cheek it is pale, and the ground's my lair."

"My mither was white, wi' lire sae red;
But thou art wan, and liker ane dead."

"Och! how should I be white and red,
Sae lang as I've been cauld and dead?"

When she cam till the chalmer in,
Down the bairns' cheeks the tears did rin.

She huskit the tane, and she brush'd it there;
She kem'd and plaited the tither's hair.

The thirden she doodl'd upon her knee,
And the fourthen * * * *

She's ta'en the fiften upon her lap,
And sweetly * * * * *

Till her eldest dochter syne said she,
"Ye hid Child Dyring come here to me."

Whan he cam till the chalmer in,
Wi' angry mood she said to him:

"I left you routh o' ale and bread;
My bairnies quail for hunger and need.

"I left ahind me braw bowsters blae;
My bairnies are liggin i' the bare strae.

"I left ye sae mony a groff wax light;
My bairnies ligg i' the mark a' night.

"Gin aft I come back to visit thee,
Wae, dowy, and weary thy luck shall be."

Up spak little Kirstin in bed that lay:
"To my bairnies I 'll do the best I may."

Aye whan they heard the dog nirr and bell,
Sae gae they the bairnies bread and ale.

Aye whan the dog did wow, in haste
They cross'd and sain'd themsells frae the ghaist.

Aye whan the little dog yowl'd wi' fear,
(And O gin I were young!)
They shook at the thought that the dead was near.
(I' the green-wood it lists me to ride.)
or,
(Fair words sae mony a heart they cheer.)

---

* "Under öe."—The original expression has been preserved here and elsewhere, because no other could be found to supply its place. There is just as much meaning in it in the translation as in the original; but it is a standard Danish ballad phrase; and as such, it is hoped, will be allowed to pass.

† "Fair."—The Dan. and Swed. *ven*, *vaen*, or *vennè*, and the Gaël. *bán*, in the oblique cases *bhán (ván)* is the origin of the Scottish *bonny*, which has so much puzzled all the etymologists.

‡ *The original of this and the following stanza is very fine.*
"Hun skød op sinè modigè been,
Der revenedè muur og graa marmorsteen."
"Der hun gik igennem den by.
De hundè de tudè saa højt i sky."

GLOSSARY.

St. 1. *May*, maid.
Lists, pleases.
2. *Bairns*, children.
In fere, together.
3. *Stead*, place.
Winsome, engaging; giving joy, (old Teut.)
4. *Syne*, then.
5. *Fessen*, fetched; brought.
6. *Drave*, drove.
7. *Dule*, sorrow.
Dout, fear.
9. *Bowster*, bolster; cushion; bed.
Blae, blue.
Strae, straw.
10. *Groff*, great; large in girt.
Mark, mirk; dark.
11. *Lang i' the night*, late.
Grat, wept.
Mools, mould; earth.
12. *Eard*, earth.
Gae, go.
14. *Prigged*, entreated earnestly and perseveringly.
Gang, go.
15. *Craw*, crow.
16. *Banes*, bones.
Stark, strong.
Bowt, bolt; elastic spring, like that of a *bolt* or *arrow* from a bow.
Riven, split asunder.
Wa', wall.
17. *Wow'd*, howled.
Lift, sky, firmament; air.
18. *Yett*, gate.
19. *Sma*, small.
22. *Lire*, complexion.
23. *Cald*, cold.
24. *Till*, to.
Rin, run.
25. *Buskit*, dressed.
Kem'd, combed.
Tither, the other.
30. *Routh*, plenty.
Quail, are quelled; die.
Need, want.
31. *Ahind*, behind.
Braw, brave; fine.
33. *Dowy*, sorrowful.
35. *Nirr*, snarl.
Bell, bark.
36. *Sain'd*, blessed; literally, *signed* with the *sign* of the cross. Before the introduction of christianity, *Runes* were used in *saining*, as a spell against the power of enchantment and evil genii.
Ghaist, ghost.

7. Up spoke the moody elfin king,
Who won'd within the hill.—P. 144.

In a long dissertation upon the fairy superstition, published in the Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border, the most valuable part of which was supplied by my learned and indefatigable friend Dr. John Leyden, most of the circumstances are collected which can throw light upon the popular belief which even yet prevails respecting them in Scotland. Dr. Grahame, author of an entertaining work upon the scenery of the Perthshire highlands, already frequently quoted, has recorded, with great accuracy, the peculiar tenets held by the highlanders on this topic, in the vicinity of Loch-Katrine. The learned

author is inclined to deduce the whole mythology from the druidical system,—an opinion to which there are many objections.

"The *Daoine Shi'*, or men of peace of the highlanders, though not absolutely malevolent, are believed to be a peevish, repining race of beings, who, possessing themselves but a scanty portion of happiness, are supposed to envy mankind their more complete and substantial enjoyments. They are supposed to enjoy, in their subterraneous recesses, a sort of shadowy happiness,—a tinsel grandeur, which, however, they would willingly exchange for the more solid joys of mortality.

"They are believed to inhabit certain round grassy eminences, where they celebrate their nocturnal festivities by the light of the moon. About a mile beyond the source of the Forth, above Loch Con, there is a place called *Coirshi'an*, or the cove of the men of peace, which is still supposed to be a favourite place of their residence. In the neighbourhood are to be seen many round conical eminences; particularly one, near the head of the lake, by the skirts of which many are still afraid to pass after sunset. It is believed, that if, on hallow-eve, any person, alone, goes round one of these hills nine times, towards the left hand, (*sinistrorsum*,) a door shall open, by which he will be admitted into their subterraneous abodes. Many, it is said, of mortal race have been entertained in their secret recesses. There they have been received into the most splendid apartments, and regaled with the most sumptuous banquets, and delicious wines. Their females surpass the daughters of men in beauty. The *seemingly* happy inhabitants pass their time in festivity, and in dancing to notes of the softest music. But unhappy is the mortal who joins in their joys, or ventures to partake of their dainties. By this indulgence, he forfeits for ever the society of men, and is bound down irrevocably to the condition of a shi'ich or man of peace.

"A woman, as is reported in the highland tradition, was conveyed, in days of yore, into the secret recesses of the men of peace. There she was recognized by one who had formerly been an ordinary mortal, but who had, by some fatality, become associated with the shi'ichs. This acquaintance, still retaining some portion of human benevolence, warned her of her danger, and counselled her, as she valued her liberty, to abstain from eating and drinking with them, for a certain space of time. She complied with the counsel of her friend; and when the period assigned was elapsed, she found herself again upon earth, restored to the society of mortals. It is added, that when she examined the viands which had been presented to her, and which had appeared so tempting to the eye, they were found, now that the enchantment was removed, to consist only of the refuse of the earth."—P. 107—111.

8. Why sounds yon stroke on beach and oak,
Our moon-light circle's screen?
Or who comes here to chase the deer,
Beloved of our elfin queen?—P. 144.

It has been already observed, that fairies, if not positively malevolent, are capricious, and easily offended. They are, like other proprietors of forests, peculiarly jealous of their rights of *vert* and *venison*, as appears from the cause of offence taken, in the original Danish ballad. This jealousy was also an attribute of the northern *Duergar*, or dwarfs; to many of whose distinctions the fairies seem to have succeeded, if, indeed, they are not the same class of beings. In the huge metrical record of German chivalry, entitled the Helden-Buch, sir Hildebrand, and the other heroes of whom it treats, are engaged in one of their most desperate adventures, from a rash violation of the rose-garden of an elfin, or dwarf king.

There are yet traces of a belief in this worst and most malicious order of fairies, among the border wilds. Dr. Leyden has introduced such a dwarf into his ballad entitled the Cout of Keeldar, and has not forgot his characteristic detestation of the chase.

The third blast that young Keeldar blew,
Still stood the limber fern,
And a wee man, of swarthy hue,
Upstarted by a cairn.
His russet weeds were brown as heath,
That clothes the upland fell;
And the hair of his head was frizzle red
As the purple heather-bell.
An urchin, clad in prickles red,
Clung cow'ring to his arm;
The hounds they howled, and backward fled,
As struck by fairy charm.
"Why rises high the stag-hound's cry,
Where stag-hound ne'er should be?
Why wakes that horn the silent morn,
Without the leave of me?"
"Brown dwarf, that o'er the muirland strays,
Thy name to Keeldar tell!"
"The brown man of the Muirs, who stays
Beneath the heather-bell.
"'Tis sweet beneath the heather-bell
To live in autumn brown;
And sweet to hear the lav'rock's swell
Far, far from tower and town.
But wo betide the shrilling horn,
The chase's surly cheer!
And ever that hunter is forlorn,
Whom first at morn I hear."

The poetical picture here given of the Duergar corresponds exactly with the following Northumbrian legend, with which I was lately favoured by my learned and kind friend, Mr. Surtees of Mainsfort, who has bestowed indefatigable labour upon the antiquities of the English border counties. The subject is in itself so curious, that the length of the note will, I hope, be pardoned.

"I have only one record to offer of the appearance of our Northumbrian Duergar. My narratrix is Elizabeth Cockburn, an old wife of Offerton, in this county, whose credit, in a case of this kind, will not, I hope, be much impeached, when I add, that she is, by her dull neighbours, supposed to be occasionally insane, but, by herself, to be at those times endowed with a faculty of seeing visions, and spectral appearances, which shun the common ken.

"In the year before the great rebellion, two young men from Newcastle were sporting on the high moors above Elsdon, and after pursuing their game several hours, sat down to dine, in a green glen, near one of the mountain streams. After their repast, the younger lad ran to the brook for water, and after stooping to drink, was surprised, on lifting his head again, by the appearance of a brown dwarf, who stood on a crag covered with brackens, across the burn. This extraordinary personage did not appear to be above half the stature of a common man, but was uncommonly stout and broad built, having the appearance of vast strength. His dress was entirely brown, the colour of the brackens, and his head covered with frizzled red hair. His countenance was expressive of the most savage ferocity, and his eyes glared like a bull. It seems, he addressed the young man first, threatening him with

his vengeance, for having trespassed on his demesnes, and asking him, if he knew in whose presence he stood? The youth replied, that he now supposed him to be the lord of the moors; that he offended through ignorance; and offered to bring him the game he had killed. The dwarf was a little mollified by this submission, but remarked, that nothing could be more offensive to him than such an offer, as he considered the wild animals as his subjects, and never failed to avenge their destruction. He condescended further to inform him, that he was, like himself, mortal, though of years far exceeding the lot of common humanity; and (what I should not have had an idea of) that he hoped for salvation. He never, he added, fed on any thing that had life, but lived, in the summer, on whortleberries, and in the winter, on nuts and apples, of which he had great store in the woods. Finally he invited his new acquaintance to accompany him home, and partake his hospitality; an offer which the youth was on the point of accepting, and was just going to spring over the brook (which if he had done, says Elizabeth, the dwarf would certainly have torn him to pieces,) when his foot was arrested by the voice of his companion, who thought he had tarried long; and on looking round again, 'the wee brown man was fled.' The story adds, that he was imprudent enough to slight the admonition, and to sport over the moors, on his way homewards; but soon after his return, he fell into a lingering disorder, and died within the year."

9. Or who may dare on wold to wear
The fairies' fatal green.—P. 144.

As the *Daoine Shi'*, or men of peace, wore green habits, they were supposed to take offence when any mortals ventured to assume their favourite colour. Indeed, from some reason, which has been, perhaps, originally a general superstition, *green* is held in Scotland to be unlucky to particular tribes and counties. The Caithness men, who hold this belief, allege, as a reason, that their bands wore that colour when they were cut off at the battle of Flodden; and for the same reason they avoid crossing the Ord on a Monday, being the day of the week on which their ill-omened array set forth. Green is also disliked by those of the name of Ogilvy: but more especially is it held fatal to the whole clan of Grahame. It is remembered of an aged gentleman of that name, that when his horse fell in a fox-chase, he accounted for it at once, by observing that the whipcord attached to his lash was of this unlucky colour.

10. For thou were christened man.—P. 144.

The elves were supposed greatly to envy the privileges acquired by christian initiation, and they gave to those mortals who had fallen into their power, a certain precedence, founded upon this advantageous distinction. Tamlane, in the old ballad, describes his own rank in the fairy procession:

"For I ride on a milk-white steed,
And aye nearest the town;
Because I was a christened knight,
They give me that renown."

I presume that, in the Danish ballad, the obstinacy of the "Weiest Elf," who would not flee for cross or sign, is to be derived from the circumstance of his having been "christened man."

How eager the elves were to obtain for their offspring the prerogatives of christianity, will be proved by the following story: "In the district called Haga, in Iceland, dwelt a nobleman called Sigward Forster, who had an intrigue with one of the subterranean females. The elf became pregnant, and exacted from her lover a firm promise that he would procure the baptism of the infant. At the appointed time, the mother came to the church-yard, on the wall of which she placed a golden cup, and a stole for the priest, agreeable to the custom of making an offering at baptism. She then stood a little apart. When the priest left the church, he inquired the meaning of what he saw, and demanded of Sigward, if he avowed himself the father of the child. But Sigward, ashamed of the connexion, denied the paternity. He was then interrogated if he desired that the child should be baptized: but this also he answered in the negative, lest, by such request, he should admit himself to be the father. On which the child was left untouched and unbaptized. Whereupon the mother, in extreme wrath, snatched up the infant and the cup, and retired, leaving the priestly cope, of which fragments are still in preservation. But this female denounced and imposed upon Sigward and his posterity, to the ninth generation, a singular disease, with which many of his descendants are afflicted at this day." Thus wrote Einar Dudmond, pastor of the parish of Garpsdale, in Iceland, a man profoundly versed in learning, from whose manuscript it was extracted by the learned Torfæus.—*Historia Hrolfi Krakii, Halfniæ*, 1715, *prefatio.*

11. And gayly shines the fairy land—
But all is glistening show.—P. 145.

No fact respecting Fairy-land seems to be better ascertained than the fantastic and illusory nature of their apparent pleasure and splendour. It has been already noticed, in the former quotations from Dr. Grahame's entertaining volume, and may be confirmed by the following highland tradition: "A woman, whose new-born child had been conveyed by them into their secret abodes, was also carried thither herself, to remain, however, only until she should suckle her infant. She, one day, during this period, observed the Shi'ichs busily employed in mixing various ingredients in a boiling caldron, and, as soon as the composition was prepared, she remarked that they all carefully anointed their eyes with it, laying the remainder aside for future use. In a moment when they were all absent, she also attempted to anoint her eyes with the precious drug, but had time to apply it to one eye only, when the *Daoine Shi'* returned. But with that eye she was henceforth enabled to see every thing as it really passed in their secret abodes:—she saw every object, not as she hitherto had done, in deceptive splendour and elegance, but in its genuine colours and form. The gaudy ornaments of the apartment were reduced to the walls of a gloomy cavern. Soon after, having discharged her office, she was dismissed to her own home. Still, however, she retained the faculty of seeing, with her medicated eye, every thing that was done, any where in her presence, by the deceptive art of the order. One day, amidst a throng of people, she chanced to observe the *Shi'ich*, or man of peace, in whose possession she had left her child, though to every other eye invisible. Prompted by maternal affection, she inadvertently accosted him, and began to inquire after the welfare of her child. The man of peace, astonished at being thus recognised by one of mortal race, demanded how she had been enabled to discover him. Awed by the terrible frown of his countenance, she acknowledged

what she had done. He spat in her eye, and extinguished it forever."—Grahame's *Sketches*, p. 116—118. It is very remarkable, that this story, translated by Dr. Grahame from popular Gaelic tradition, is to be found in the Otia Imperialia of Gervase of Tilbury. A work of great interest might be compiled upon the origin of popular fiction, and the transmission of similar tales from age to age, and from country to country. The mythology of one period would then appear to pass into the romance of the next century, and that into the nursery-tale of the subsequent ages. Such an investigation, while it went greatly to diminish our ideas of the richness of human invention, would also show, that these fictions, however wild and childish, possesses such charms for the populace, as to enable them to penetrate into countries unconnected by manners and language, and having no apparent intercourse to afford the means of transmission. It would carry me far beyond my bounds to produce instances of this community of fable, among nations who never borrowed from each other any thing intrinsically worth learning. Indeed, the wild diffusion of popular fictions may be compared to the facility with which straws and feathers are dispersed abroad by the wind, while valuable metals cannot be transported without trouble and labour. There lives, I believe, only one gentleman, whose unlimited acquaintance with this subject might enable him to do it justice; I mean my friend Mr. Francis Douce, of the British Museum, whose usual kindness will, I hope, pardon my mentioning his name, while on a subject so closely connected with his extensive and curious researches.

12. ———I sunk down in a sinful fray,
And, 'twixt life and death, was snatched away
To the joyless elfin bower.—P. 145.

The subjects of fairy land were recruited from the regions of humanity by a sort of *crimping* system, which extended to adults as well as to infants. Many of those who were in this world supposed to have discharged the debt of nature, had only become denizens of the "Londe of Faery." In the beautiful fairy romance of Orfee Heurodiis (Orpheus and Eurydice) in the Auchinleck MS. is the following striking enumeration of persons thus abstracted from middle earth. Mr. Ritson unfortunately published this romance from a copy in which the following, and many other highly poetical passages, do not occur:

"Then he gan biholde aboute al,
And seighe full liggeand within the wal,
Of folk that wer thidder y-brought,
And thought dede and ne're nought.
Sum stode withouten hedde;
And sum none armes nade;
And sum thurch the bodi hedde wounde;
And sum lay wode y-bounde;
And sum armed on hors sete;
And sum astrangled as thai ete;
And sum war in water adreynt;
And sum with fire al for-schreynt;
Wives ther lay on childe bedde;
Sum dede, and sum awedde;
And wonder fele ther lay besides,
Right as thai slepe her undertides;
Eche was thus in the warld y-nome,
With fairi thider y-come."

13. Though space and law the stag we lend,
* * * * * *
Who ever recked where, how, or when,
The prowling fox was trapped and slain.—P. 148.

St. John actually used this illustration when engaged in confuting the plea of law proposed for the unfortunate earl of Strafford: "It was true, we give laws to hares and deer, because they are beasts of chase; but it was never accounted either cruelty or foul play to knock foxes or wolves on the head as they can be found, because they are beasts of prey. In a word, the law and humanity were alike; the one being more fallacious, and the other more barbarous, than In any age had been vented in such authority."—Clarendon's *History of the Rebellion*. Oxford, 1702, fol. vol. p. 183.

14. ———his highland cheer,
The hardened flesh of mountain-deer.—P. 143.

The Scottish highlanders, in former times, had a coneise mode of cooking their venison, or rather of dispensing with cooking it, which appears greatly to have surprised the French, whom chance made acquainted with it. The vidame of Chartres, when a hostage in England, during the reign of Edward VI, was permitted to travel into Scotland, and penetrated as far as to the remote highlands, *(au fin fond des sauvages.)* After a great hunting party, at which a most wonderful quantity of game was destroyed, he saw these *Scottish savages* devour a part of their venison raw, without any further preparation than compressing it between two battons of wood, so as to force out the blood, and render it extremely hard. This they reckoned a great delicacy; and when the vidame partook of it, his compliance with their taste rendered him extremely popular. This curious trait of manners was communicated by Mons. de Montmorency, a great friend of the vidame, to Brantome, by whom it is recorded in *Vies des Hommes Illustres, Discours*, LXXXIX. art. 14. The process by which the raw venison was rendered eatable is described very minutely in the romance of Perceforest, where Estonne, a Scottish knight errant, having slain a deer, says to his companion Claudin; "Sire, or mangerez vous et moy aussi. Voire si nous auions de feu, dit Claudius. Par l'ame de mon pere, dist Estonne, ie vous atourneray et cuiray a la maniere de nostre pays comme pour cheualier errant. Lors tira son espee et sen vint a la branche dung arbre, et y fait vng grant trou, et puis fend al branche, bien deux piedz et boute la cuisse du cerf entredeux, et puis prent le lieol de son cheval et en lye la branche et destraint si forte que le sang et les humeurs de la chair saillent hors et demeure la chair doulee et seiche. Lors prent la chair et oste ius le cuir et la chair demeure aussi blanche comme si ee feust dung chappon. Dont dist a Claudius, sire, ie la vous ay cuiste a la guise de mon pays, vous en pouez manger hardyement, car ie mangeray premier. Lors met sa main a sa selle en vng lieu quil y auoit, et tire hors sel et poudre de poiure et gingembre, mesle ensemble, et le iecte dessus, et le frote sus bien fort, puis le couppe a moytie, et en donne a Claudius l'une des pieces, et puis mort en l'autre aussi sauoureusement quil est aduis que il an feist la pouldre voller. Quant Claudius veit quil le mangeoit de tel goust, il en print grant fain et commence a manger tresvoulentiers, et dist a Estonne: par l'ame de moy ie ne mangeay onequesmais de chair atournee de telle guise: mais doresenauant ie ne me retourneroye pas hors de mon chemin par auoir la cuite. Sire, dist Estonne, quant ie suis en desers d'Escosse, dont ie suis seigneur, ie cheuaucheray huit iours ou quinze que ie n'entreray en chastel ne en maison, et si ne verray feu ne personne viuant fors que bestes sauuages, et de celles mangeray atournees en ceste maniere, et mieulx me plaira que la viande de l'empereur. Ainsi sen

vont mangeant et cheuauchant iusques adonc quilz arriuerent sur une moult belle fontaine que estoit en vne valee. Quant Estonne la vit il dist a Claudius, allons boire a ceste fontaine. Or beuuons, dist Estonne, du boire que le grand dieu a pouruen a toutes gens, et qui me plaist mieulx que les ceruoises d'Angleterre."—*La Treselegante Hystoire du tresnoble Roy Perceforest.* Paris, 1531, fol. tome i, fol. lv, vers.

After all, it may be doubted whether *la chair nostree*, for so the French called the venison thus summarily prepared, was any thing more than a mere rude kind of deer-ham.

NOTES TO CANTO V.

1. Not then claimed sovereignty his due,
While Albany, with feeble hand,
Held borrowed truncheon of command.—P. 149.

There is scarcely a more disorderly period in Scottish history than that which succeeded the battle of Flodden, and occupied the minority of James V. Feuds of ancient standing broke out like old wounds, and every quarrel among the independent nobility, which occurred daily, and almost hourly, gave rise to fresh blood-shed. "There arose," says Pitscottie, "great trouble and deadly feuds in many parts of Scotland, both in the north and the west parts. The master of Forbes, in the north, slew the laird of Meldrum under tryst, (i. e. *at an agreed and secured meeting:*) Likewise, the laird of Drummelzier slew the lord Fleming at the hawking; and, likewise, there was slaughter among many other great lords." p. 121. Nor was the matter much mended under the government of the earl of Angus: for though he caused the king to ride through all Scotland, "under pretence and colour of justice, to punish thief and traitor, none were found greater than were in their own company. And none at that time durst strive with a Douglas, nor yet with a Douglas's man, for if they did, they got the worse. Therefore, none durst plainzie of no extorsion, theft, reiff, nor slaughter, done to them by the Douglasses, or their men; in that cause they were not heard, so long as the Douglasses had the court in guiding."—*Ibid.* p. 133.

2. The Gael, of plain and river heir,
Shall, with strong hand, redeem his share.—P. 149.

The ancient highlanders verified in their practice the lines of Gray;—

An iron race the mountain cliffs maintain,
Foes to the gentler genius of the plain;
For where unwearied sinews must be found,
With sidelong plough to quell the flinty ground;
To turn the torrent's swift-descending flood;
To tame the savage rushing from the wood;
What wonder if, to patient valour train'd,
They guard with spirit what by strength they gain'd;
And while their rocky ramparts round they see
The rough abode of want and liberty,
(As lawless force from confidence will grow)
Insult the plenty of the vales below?
Fragment on the alliance of Education and Government.

So far, indeed, was a *Creagh*, or foray, from being held disgraceful, that a young chief was always expected to show his talents for command so soon as he assumed it, by leading his clan on a successful enterprise of this nature, either against a neighbouring sept, for which constant feuds usually furnished an apology, or against the *Sassenach*, Saxons, or lowlanders, for which no apology was necessary. The Gael, great traditional historians, never forgot that the lowlands had, at some remote period, been the property of their Celtic forefathers, which furnished an ample vindication of all the ravages that they could make on the unfortunate districts which lay within their reach. Sir James Grant of Grant is in possession of a letter of apology from Cameron of Lochiel, whose men had committed some depredations upon a farm called Moines, occupied by one of the Grants. Lochiel assures Grant, that, however the mistake had happened, his instructions were precise, that the party should foray the province of Moray, (a lowland district,) where, as he coolly observes, "all men take their prey."

3. ————I only meant
To show the reed on which you leant,
Deeming this path you might pursue,
Without a pass from Roderick Dhu.—P. 150.

This incident, like some other passages in the poem, illustrative of the character of the ancient Gael, is not imaginary, but borrowed from fact. The highlanders, with the inconsistency of most nations in the same state, were alternately capable of great exertions of generosity, and of cruel revenge and perfidy. The following story I can only quote from tradition, but with such an assurance from those by whom it was communicated, as permits me little doubt of its authenticity. Early in the last century, John Gunn, a noted Cateran, or highland robber, invested Inverness-shire, and levied *black mail* up to the walls of the provincial capital. A garrison was then maintained in the castle of that town, and their pay (country banks being unknown) was usually transmitted in specie, under the guard of a small escort. It chanced that the officer who commanded this litle party was unexpectedly obliged to halt, about thirty miles from Inverness, at a miserable inn. About night fall, a stranger, in the highland dress, and of very prepossessing appearance, entered the same house. Separate accommodation being impossible, the Englishman offered the newly arrived guest a part of his supper, which was accepted with reluctance. By the conversation he found his new acquaintance knew well all the passes of the country, which induced him eagerly to request his company on the ensuing morning. He neither disguised his business and charge, nor his apprehensions of that celebrated freebooter, John Gunn. The highlander hesitated a moment, and then frankly consented to be his guide. Forth they set in the morning; and in travelling through a solitary and dreary glen, the discourse again turned on John Gunn. "Would you like to see him?" said the guide; and, without waiting an answer to this alarming question, he whistled, and the English officer, with his small party, were surrounded by a body of highlanders, whose numbers put resistance out of question, and who were all well armed. "Stranger," resumed the guide, "I am that very John Gunn by whom you feared to be intercepted, and not without cause; for I came to the inn last night with the express purpose of learning your route, that I and my followers might ease you of your charge by the road. But I am incapable of betraying the trust you reposed in me, and, having convinced you that you were in my power, I can only dismiss you unplundered and uninjured." He then gave the officer directions for his journey, and disappeared with his party, as suddenly as they had presented themselves.

4. On Bochastle the mouldering lines,
Where Rome, the empress of the world,
Of yore her eagle wings unfurled.—P. 150.

The torrent which discharges itself from Loch-Vennachar, the lowest and eastmost of the three lakes which form the scenery adjoining to the Trosachs, sweeps through a flat and extensive moor, called Bochastle. Upon a small eminence, called the *Dun* of Bochastle, and indeed on the plain itself, are some entrenchments which have been thought Roman. There is adjacent, to Callender, a sweet villa, the residence of captain Fairfowl, entitled the Roman camp.

5. See, here, all vantageless I stand,
Armed, like thyself, with single brand.—P. 150.

The duelists of former times did not always stand upon those punctilios respecting equality of arms, which are now judged essential to fair combat. It is true, that in formal combats in the lists, the parties were, by the judges of the field, put as nearly as possible in the same circumstances. But in private duel it was often otherwise. In that desperate combat which was fought between Quelus, a minion of Henry III of France, and Antraguet, with two seconds on each side, from which only two persons escaped alive, Quelus complained that his antagonist had over him the advantage of a poniard which he used in parrying, while his left hand, which he was forced to employ for the same purpose, was cruelly mangled. When he charged Antraguet with this odds, "Thou hast done wrong," answered he," to forget thy dagger at home. We are here to fight, and not to settle punctilios of arms." In a similar duel, however, a younger brother of the house of Aubanye, in Angoulesme, behaved more generously on the like occasion, and at once threw away his dagger, when his enemy challenged it as an undue advantage. But at this time hardly any thing can be conceived more horridly brutal and savage, than the mode in which private quarrels were conducted in France. Those who were most jealous of the point of honour, and acquired the title of *Ruffinés*, did not scruple to take every advantage of strength, numbers, surprise, and arms, to accomplish their revenge. The sieur de Brantome, to whose discourse on duels I am obliged for these particulars, gives the following account of the death and principles of his friend, the baron de Vitaux:

"J'ay oui conter à un tireur d'armes, qui apprit à Millaud à en tirer, lequel s'appelloit seigneur le Jacques Ferron, de la ville d'Ast, qui avoit esté à moy, il fut depuis tué à Sainct-Basille en Gascogne, lors que monsieur du Mayne l'assiégea, lui servant d'ingénieur; et de malheur, je l'avois adressé audit baron quelques trois mois auparavant, pour l'exercer a tirer, bien qu'il en sçeust prou; mais il n'en fit conte: et le laissant, Millaud s'en servit, et le rendit fort adroit. Ce seigneur Jacques donc me raconta, qu'il s'estoit monté sur un noyer, assez loing, pour en voir le combat, et qu'il ne vist jamais homme y aller plus bravement, ny plus résolument, ny de grace plus assurée ny déterminée. Il commença de marcher de cinquante pas vers son ennemy, relevant souvent ses moustaches en haut d'une main; et estant à vingt pas de son ennemy, (non plustost) il mit la main à l'espée qu'il tenoit en la main, non qu'il l'eust tiré encore; mais en marchant, il fit voller le fourreau en l'air, en le secouant, ce qui est le beau de cela, et qui monstroit bien une grace de combat bien assieurée et froide, et nullement téméraire, comme il y en a qui tirent leurs espées de cinq cents pas de l'ennemy, voire de mille, comme j'en ay veu aucuns. Ainsi mourut ce brave baron, le paragon de France, qu'on nommoit tel, à bien venger ses querelles, par grandes et déterminées résolutions. Il n'estoit pas seulement estimé en France, mais en Italie, Espaigne, Allemaigne, en Boulogne et Angleterre; et desiroient fort les estrangers, venant en France, le voir; car je l'ay veu, tant sa renommée volloit. Il estoit fort petit de corps, mais fort grand de courage. Ses ennemies disoient qu'il ne tuoit pas bien ses gens, que par advantages et supercheries. Certes, je tiens des grands capitaines, et mesmes d'Italiens, qui sont estez d'autres fois les premiers vengeurs du monde, in *ogni modo*, disoient-ils, qui ont tenu cette maxime, qu'une supercherie ne se devoit payer que par semblable monnoye, et n'y alloit point là de déshonneur."—*Œuvres de Brantome*, Paris, 1787-8. Tome viii, p. 90-92. It may be necessary to inform the reader, that this paragon of France was the most foul assassin of his time, and had committed many desperate murders, chiefly by the assistance of his hired banditti; from which it may be conceived how little the point of honour of the period deserved its name. I have chosen to give the heroes, who are indeed of an earlier period, a stronger tincture of the spirit of chivalry.

6. Ill fared it then with Roderick Dhu,
That on the field his targe he threw.—P. 151.

A round target of light wood, covered with strong leather, and studded with brass or iron, was a necessary part of a highlander's equipment. In charging regular troops, they received the thrust of the bayonet in this buckler, twisted it aside, and used the broadsword against the encumbered soldier. In the civil war of 1745, most of the front-rank of the clans were thus armed; and captain Grose informs us, that, in 1747, the privates of the 42d regiment, then in Flanders, were for the most part permitted to carry targets. *Military Antiquities*, vol. i, p. 164. A person thus armed had a considerable advantage in private fray. Among verses between Swift and Sheridan, lately published by Dr. Barrett, there is an account of such an encounter, in which the circumstances, and consequently the relative superiority of the combatants, are precisely the reverse of those in the text:

A highlander once fought a Frenchman at Margate,
The weapons, a rapier, a back-sword, and target;
Brisk monsieur advanced as fast as he could,
But all his fine pushes were caught in the wood,
And sawny, with back-sword, did slash him and nick him,
While t'other enraged that he could not once prick him,
Cried, "Sirrah, you rascal, you son of a whore,
Me will fight you, be gar! if you'll come from your door."

7. For, trained abroad his arms to wield,
Fitz-James's blade was sword and shield.—P. 151.

The use of defensive armour, and particularly of the buckler or target, was general in queen Elizabeth's time, although that of the single rapier seems to have been occasionally practised much earlier.* Rowland Yorke, however, who betrayed the fort of Zutphen to the Spaniards, for which good service he was afterwards poisoned by them, is said to have been the first who brought the rapier-fight into general use. Fuller, speaking of the swash-bucklers, or bullies of queen Elizabeth's time, says, "West Smithfield was formerly called Ruffian's Hall, where such men usually met, casually or otherwise, to try *masteries* with sword and buckler. More were frightened

* See Douce's Illustrations of Shakspeare, vol. ii, p. 61.

than hurt, more hurt than killed therewith, it being accounted unmanly to strike beneath the knee. But since that desperate traitor Rowland Yorke first introduced thrusting with rapiers, sword and buckler are disused." In "The Two Angry Women of Abingdon," a comedy, printed in 1599, we have a pathetic complaint;—"Sword and buckler fight begins to grow out of use. I am sorry for it: I shall never see good manhood again. If it be once gone, this poking fight of rapier and dagger will come up; then a tall man, and a good sword and buckler man, will be spitted like a cat or rabbit." But the rapier had upon the continent long superseded, in private duel, the use of sword and shield. The masters of the noble science of defence were chiefly Italians. They made great mystery of their art and mode of instruction, never suffered any person to be present but the scholar who was to be taught, and even examined closets, beds, and other places of possible concealment. Their lessons often gave the most treacherous advantages; for the challenger, having the right to choose his weapons, frequently selected some strange, unusual, and inconvenient kind of arms, the use of which he practised under these instructors, and thus killed at his ease his antagonist, to whom it was presented for the first time on the field of battle. See *Brantome's discourse on Duels*, and the work on the same subject, "*si gentement écrit*," by the venerable Dr. Paris de Puteo. The highlanders continued to use broadsword and target until disarmed after the affair of 1745–6.

8. Like mountain-cat who guards her young,
Full at Fitz-James's throat he sprung.—P. 151.

I have not ventured to render this duel so savagely desperate as that of the celebrated sir Ewan of Lochiel, chief of the clan Cameron, called, from his sable complexion, Ewan Dhu. He was the last man in Scotland who maintained the royal cause during the great civil war, and his constant incursions rendered him a very unpleasant neighbour to the republican garrison at Inverlochy, now Fort William. The governor of the fort detached a party of three hundred men to lay waste Lochiel's possessions, and cut down his trees; but, in a sudden and desperate attack, made upon them by the chieftain, with very inferior numbers, they were almost all cut to pieces. The skirmish is detailed in a curious memoir of sir Ewan's life, printed in the Appendix of Pennant's Scottish Tour.

"In this engagement, Lochiel himself had several wonderful escapes. In the retreat of the English, one of the strongest and bravest of the officers retired behind a bush, when he observed Lochiel pursuing, and seeing him unaccompanied with any, he leaped out, and thought him his prey. They met one another with equal fury. The combat was long and doubtful: the English gentleman had by far the advantage in strength and size; but Lochiel exceeding him in nimbleness and agility, in the end tript the sword out of his hand: they closed, and wrestled, till both fell to the ground, in each other's arms. The English officer got above Lochiel, and pressed him hard, but stretching forth his neck, by attempting to disengage himself, Lochiel, who by this time had his hands at liberty, with his left hand seized him by the collar, and jumping at his extended throat, he bit it with his teeth quite through, and kept such a hold of his grasp, that he brought away his mouthful: this, he said, was *the sweetest bit he ever had in his lifetime.*"—Vol. i, p. 375.

9. —Ye towers! within whose circuit dread
A Douglas by his sovereign bled,
And thou, O sad and fatal mound!
That oft hast heard the death-axe sound.—P. 152.

Stirling was often polluted with noble blood. It is thus apostrophized by J. Johnston:

——————Discordia tristis
Heu quoties procerum sanguine tinxit humum!
Hoc uno infelix, et felix cætera, nusquam
Lætior aut cœli frons geniusve soli.

The fate of William, eighth earl of Douglas, whom James II stabbed in Stirling castle with his own hand, and while under his royal safe-conduct, is familiar to all who read Scottish history. Murdack duke of Albany, Duncan earl of Lennox, his father-in-law, and his two sons, Walter and Alexander Stuart, were executed at Stirling, in 1425. They were beheaded upon an eminence without the castle walls, but making part of the same hill, from whence they could behold their strong castle of Doune, and their extensive possessions. This "heading hill," as it was sometimes termed, bears commonly the less terrible name of Hurly-hacket, from its having been the scene of a courtly amusement alluded to by Sir David Lindsay, who says of the pastimes in which the young king was engaged,

"Some harled him to the Hurly-hacket;"

which consisted in sliding, in some sort of chair it may be supposed, from top to bottom of a smooth bank. The boys of Edinburgh, about twenty years ago, used to play at the hurly-hacket on the Calton-hill, using for their seat a horse's skull.

10. The burghers hold their sports to-day.—P. 152.

Every burgh of Scotland, of the least note, but more especially the considerable towns, had their solemn *play*, or festival, when feats of archery were exhibited, and prizes distributed to those who excelled in wrestling, hurling the bar, and the other gymnastic exercises of the period. Stirling, a usual place of royal residence, was not likely to be deficient in pomp upon such occasions, especially since James V was very partial to them. His ready participation in these popular amusements was one cause of his acquiring the title of king of the Commons, or *Rex Plebeiorum*, as Lesley has latinized it. The usual prize to the best shooter was a silver arrow. Such a one is preserved at Selkirk and at Peebles. At Dumfries, a silver gun was substituted, and the contention transferred to fire-arms. The ceremony, as there performed, is the subject of an excellent Scottish poem, by Mr. John Mayne, entitled the Siller Gun, 1808, which surpasses the efforts of Ferguson, and comes near those of Burns.

Of James's attachment to archery, Pitscottie, the faithful, though rude recorder of the manners of that period, has given us evidence:

"In this year there came an ambassador out of England, named lord William Howard, with a bishop with him, with many other gentlemen, to the number of threescore horse, which were all the able men and waled (picked) men for all kind of games and pastimes, shooting, louping, running, wrestling, and casting of the stone, but they were well 'sayed (essayed or tried) ere they past out of Scotland, and that by their own provocation; but ever they tint: till at last, the queen of Scotland, the king's mother, favoured the English-men, because she was the king of England's sister: and therefore she took an enterprise of archery upon the English-men's hands, contrary her son the king,

and any six in Scotland that he would wale, either gentlemen or yeomen, that the English-men should shoot against them, either at pricks, revers, or buts, as the Scots pleased.

"The king hearing this of his mother, was content, and gart her pawn a hundred crowns, and a tun of wine, upon the English-men's hands; and he incontinent laid down as much for the Scottish-men. The field and ground was chosen in St. Andrews, and three landed men and three yeomen chosen to shoot against the English-men, to wit, David Wemyss of that ilk, David Arnot of that ilk, and Mr. John Wedderburn, vicar of Dundee; the yeomen, John Thomson, in Leith, Steven Taburner, with a piper, called Alexander Bailie; they shot very near, and warred (worsted) the English-men of the enterprise, and wan the hundred crowns and the tun of wine, which made the king very merry that his men wan the victory."—P. 147.

11. ——————Robin Hood.—P. 152.

The exhibition of this renowned outlaw and his band was a favourite frolic at such festivals as we are describing. This sporting, in which kings did not disdain to be actors, was prohibited in Scotland upon the Reformation, by a statute of the 6th parliament of queen Mary, c. 61, A. D. 1555, which ordered, under heavy penalties, that "na manner of person be chosen Robert Hude, nor Little John, Abbot of Unreason, queen of May, nor otherwise." But 1561, "the rascal multitude," says John Knox, "were stirred up to make a Robin Hude, whilk enormity was of mony years left and damned by statute and act of parliament; yet would they not be forbidden." Accordingly they raised a very serious tumult, and at length made prisoners the magistrates who endeavoured to suppress it, and would not release them till they extorted a formal promise that no one should be punished for his share of the disturbance. It would seem, from the complaints of the general assembly of the kirk, that these profane festivities were continued down to 1592.* Bold Robin was, to say the least, equally successful in maintaining his ground against the reformed clergy of England: for the simple and evangelical Latimer complains of coming to a country church, where the people refused to hear him, because it was Robin Hood's day; and his mitre and rochet were fain to give way to the village pastime. Much curious information on this subject may be found in the preliminary Dissertation to the late Mr. Ritson's edition of the songs respecting this memorable outlaw. The game of Robin Hood was usually acted in May; and he was associated with the morrice-dancers, on whom so much illustration has been bestowed by the commentators on Shakspeare. A very lively picture of these festivities, containing a great deal of curious information on the subject of the private life and amusements of our ancestors, was thrown, by the late ingenious Mr. Strutt, into his romance entitled Queen-Hoo-Hall, published, after his death, in 1808.

12. Indifferent as to archer wight,
The monarch gave the arrow bright.—P. 153.

The Douglas of the poem is an imaginary person, a supposed uncle of the earl of Angus. But the king's behaviour during an unexpected interview with the laird of Kilspinde, one of the banished Douglasses, under circumstances similar to those in the text, is imitated from a real story told by Hume of Godscroft. I would have availed myself more fully of the simple and affecting circumstances of the old history, had they not been already woven into a pathetic ballad by my friend Mr. Finlay.*

"His (the king's) implacability (towards the family of Douglas) did also appear in his carriage towards Archibald of Kilspindie, whom he, when he was a child, loved singularly well for his ability of body, and was wont to call him his Gray-Steill.† Archibald being banished into England, could not well comport with the humour of that nation, which he thought to be too proud, and that they had too high a conceit of themselves, joined with a contempt and despising of all others. Wherefore, being wearied of that life, and remembering the king's favour of old towards him, he determined to try the king's mercifulness and clemency. So he comes into Scotland, and, taking occasion of the king's hunting in the park at Stirling, he casts himself to be in his way, as he was coming home to the castle. So soon as the king saw him afar off, ere he came near, he guessed it was he, and said to one of his courtiers, yonder is my Gray-Steill, Archibald of Kilspindie, if he be alive. The other answered, that it could not be he, and that he durst not come into the king's presence. The king approaching, he fell upon his knees and craved pardon, and promised from thenceforward to abstain from meddling in public affairs, and to lead a quiet and private life. The king went by, without giving him any answer, and trotted a good round pace up the hill. Kilspindie followed, and, though he wore on him a secret, or shirt of mail, for his particular enemies, was as soon at the castle-gate as the king. There he sat him down upon a stone without, and entreated some of the king's servants for a cup of drink, being weary and thirsty; but they, fearing the king's displeasure, durst give him none. When the king was set at his dinner, he asked what he had done, what he had said, and whither he had gone? It was told him that he had desired a cup of drink, and had gotten none. The king reproved them very sharply for their discourtesy, and told them, that if he had not taken an oath that no Douglas should ever serve him, he would have received him into his service, for he had seen him some time a man of great ability. Then he sent him word to go to Leith, and expect his further pleasure. Then some kinsman of David Falconer, the canonier that was slain at Tantallon, began to quarrel with Archibald about the matter, wherewith the king showed himself not well pleased when he heard of it. Then he commanded him to go to France for a certain space, till he heard further from him. And so he did, and died shortly after. This gave occasion to the king of England (Henry VIII) to blame his nephew, alleging the old saying, That a king's face should give grace. For this Archibald (whatsoever were Angus's or sir George's fault) had not been principal actor of any thing, nor no counsellor nor stirrer up, but only a follower of his friends, and that noways cruelly disposed."—Hume *of Godscroft*, ii, 107.

13. Prize of the wrestling match, the king
To Douglas gave a golden ring.—P. 153.

The usual prize of a wrestling was a ram and a

* Book of the universal kirk, p. 414.

* See Scottish Historical and Romantic Ballads, Glasgow, 1808, vol. ii, p. 117.

† A champion of popular romance. See Ellis's *Romances*, vol. ii.

ring, but the animal would have embarrassed my story. Thus in the Coke's Tale of Gamelyn, ascribed to Chaucer:

> There happed to be there beside
> Tryed a wrestling;
> And therefore there was y-setten
> A ram and als a ring.

Again the Litil Geste of Robin Hood:

> ———By a bridge was a wrestling,
> And there taryed was he,
> And there was all the best yemen
> Of all the west countrey.
> A full fayre game there was set up,
> A white bull up y-pight,
> A great courser with saddle and brydle,
> With gold burnished full bryght;
> A payre of gloves, a red golde ring,
> A pipe of wyne, good fay;
> What man bereth him best I wis,
> The prise shall bear away.
> *Ritson's Robin Hood*, vol. i.

NOTES TO CANTO VI.

1. These drew not for their fields the sword,
Like tenants of a feudal lord,
Nor owned the patriarchal claim
Of chieftain in their leader's name;
Adventurers they,———P. 155.

The Scottish armies consisted chiefly of the nobility and barons, with their vassals, who held lands under them, for military service by themselves and their tenants. The patriarchal influence exercised by the heads of clans in the highlands and borders was of a different nature, and sometimes at variance with feudal principles. It flowed from the *patria potestas* exercised by the chieftain, as representing the original father of the whole name, and was often obeyed in contradiction to the feudal superior. James V seems first to have introduced, in addition to the militia furnished from these sources, the service of a small number of mercenaries, who formed a body-guard, called the foot-band. The satirical poet, sir David Lindsay (or the person who wrote the prologue to his play of the "Three Estaites,") has introduced Finlay of the foot-band, who, after much swaggering upon the stage, is at length put to flight by the fool, who terrifies him by means of a sheep's skull upon a pole. I have rather chosen to give them the harsh features of the mercenary soldiers of the period, than of this Scottish Thraso. These partook of the character of the adventurous companions of Froissart, or the Condottieri of Italy.

One of the best and liveliest traits of such manners is the last will of a leader, called Geffroy Tete Noir, who having been slightly wounded in a skirmish, his intemperance brought on a mortal disease. When he found himself dying, he summoned to his bed-side the adventurers whom he commanded, and thus addressed them:

"Fayre sirs, quod Geffray, I knowe well ye have alwayes served and honoured me as men ought to serve their soveraygne and capitayne, and I shal be the gladder if ye will agre to have to your capitayne one that is descended of my blode. Behold here Aleyne Roux, my cosyn, and Peter his brother, who are men of armes and of my blode. I require you to make Aleyne your capitayne, and to swere to him faythe, obeysaunce, love, and loyalte, here in my presence, and also to his brother: howe be it, I will that Aleyne have the soverayne charge.—Sir, quod they, we are well content, for ye hauve right well chosen. Tuere all the companyons made theym servyant to Aleyne Roux and to Peter his brother. When all that was done, then Geffraye spake agayne, and sayd: Nowe, sirs, ye have obeyed to my pleasure, I canne you great thanke: wherefore, sirs, I wyll ye have parte of that ye have holpen to conquere. I say unto you, that in yonder chest that ye se stande yonder, therein is to the sum of xxx thousand frankes,—I wyll give them accordynge to my conseyence. Wyll ye all be content to fulfil my testament; howe say ye?—Sir, quod they, we be ryghte well contente to fulfyl your commaundement. Thane first, quod he, I wyll and give to the chapell of saynt George, here in this castell, for the reparacions thereof, a thousande and five hundrede frankes: and I give to my lover, who hath truly served me, two thousand and five hundrede frankes: and also I give to Aleyne Roux, your new capitayne, four thousande frankes: also to the varlettes of my chambre I gyve fyve hundrede frankes. To mine offycers I give a thousande and five hundrede frankes. The rest I gyve and bequeth as I shall show you. Ye be upon a thyrtie companyons all of one sorte: ye ought to be brethrene, and all of one alyaunce, without debate, ryotte, or stryffe among you. All this that I have showed you ye shall fynde in yonder cheste. I wylle that ye departe all the residue equally and truelly bitwene you thyrtie. And if ye be nat thus contente, but that the devylle wyll set debate bitwene you, than beholde yonder is a strong axe, breke up the coffer, and get it who can.—To these words every one ansuered and said, sir, and dere maister, we are and shall be all of one accorde. Sir, we have so much loved and doated you, that we will breke no coffer, nor breke no poynt of that ye have ordayned and commanded."—Lord Berners' *Froissart.*

2. Thou now hast glee-maiden and harp!
Get thee an ape, and trudge the land,
The leader of a juggler band.—P. 156.

The jongleurs, or jugglers, as we learn from the elaborate work of the late Mr. Strutt, on the sports and pastimes of the people of England, used to call in the aid of various assistants, to render these performances as captivating as possible. The glee-maiden was a necessary attendant. Her duty was tumbling and dancing: and therefore the Anglo-Saxon version of saint Mark's gospel states Herodias to have vaulted or tumbled before king Herod. In Scotland, these poor creatures seem, even at a late period, to have been bondswomen to their masters, as appears from a case reported by Fountainhall. "Reid the mountebank pursues Scott of Harden and his lady, for stealing away from him a little girl, called the tumbling-lassie, that danced upon his stage; and he claimed damages, and produced a contract, whereby he bought her from her mother, for 30*l.* Scots. But we have no slaves in Scotland, and mothers cannot sell their bairns; and physicians attested, the employment of tumbling would kill her; and her joints were now grown stiff, and she declined to return; though she was at least a 'prentice and so could not run away from her master; yet some cited Moses's law, that if a servant sheltered himself with thee, against his master's cruelty, thou shalt surely not deliver him up. The lords, *renitente cancellario*, assoilzied Harden on the 27th of January, (1687.)" —*Fountainhall's Decisions*, vol. i, p. 439.*

* Though less to my purpose, I cannot help noticing a circumstance respecting another of this Mr. Reid's attendants, which occurred during James II's zeal for catholic proselytism, and is told by Fountainhall, with dry

The facetious qualities of the ape soon rendered him an acceptable addition to the strolling band of the jongleur. Ben Jonson, in his splenetic introduction to the comedy of "Bartholomew Fair," is at pains to inform the audience that "he has ne'er a sword and buckler man in his fair, nor a juggler, with a well educated ape, to come over the chaine for the king of England, and back again for the prince, and sit still on his haunches for the pope and the king of Spain."

3. That stirring air that peals on high,
O'er Dermid's race our victory.
Strike it!————P. 157.

There are several instances, at least in tradition, of persons so much attached to particular tunes, as to require to hear them on their death-bed. Such an anecdote is mentioned by the late Mr. Riddell, of Glenriddell, in his collection of border tunes, respecting an air called the "Dandling of the Bairns," for which a certain Gallovidian laird is said to have evinced this strong mark of partiality. It is popularly told of a famous freebooter, that he composed the tune known by the name of Macpherson's rant while under sentence of death, and played it at the gallows-tree. Some spirited words have been adapted to it by Burns. A similar story is recounted of a Welsh bard, who composed and played on his death-bed the air called *Dafyddy Garregg Wen*.

But the most curious example is given by Brantome, of a maid of honour at the court of France, entitled, Mademoiselle de Limueil. "Durant sa maladie, dont elle trespassa, jamais elle ne cessa, ains causa tousjours: car elle estoit forte grande parleuse, brocardeuse, et très-bien et fort à propos, et très-belle avec cela. Quand l'heure de sa fin fut venue, elle fit venir à soy son valet, (ainsi que les filles de la cour en ont chacune un,) qui s'appeloit Julien, et scavoit très-bien jouer du violon. 'Julien, luy dit elle, prenez vostre violon, et sonnez moy tousjours jusques à ce que me voyez morte (car je m'y en vais) la défaite des Suisses, et le mieux que vous pourrez, et quand vous serez sur le mot, 'Tout est perdu,' sonnez le par quatre ou cinq fois, le plus piteusement que vous pourrez,' ce qui fit l'autre, et elle-mesme luy aidoit de la voix, et quand ce vint 'tout est perdu,' elle le réitera par deux fois; et se tournant de l'autre costé du chevet, elle dit à ses compagnes; 'Tout est perdu à ce coup, et à bon escient;' et ainsi décéda. Voila une morte joyeuse et plaisante. Je tiens ceconte de deux de ses compagnes, dignes de fois, qui virent jouer ce mystere."—*Œuvres de Brantome*, iii, 507.

The tune to which this fair lady chose to make her final exit was composed on the defeat of the Swiss at Marignano. The burden is quoted by Panurge, in Rabelais, and consists of these words, imitating the jargon of the Swiss, which is a mixture of French and German:

"Tout est velore
La Tintelore.
Tout est velore by Got!"

4. Battle of Beal' an Duine.—P. 157.

A skirmish actually took place at a pass thus called in the Trosachs, and closed with the remarkable incident mentioned in the text. It was greatly posterior in date to the reign of James V.

"In this roughly-wooded island,* the country people secreted their wives and children, and their most valuable effects, from the rapacity of Cromwell's soldiers, during their inroad into this country, in the time of the republic. These invaders, not venturing to ascend by the ladders, along the side of the lake, took a more circuitous road, through the heart of the Trosachs, the most frequented path at that time, which penetrates the wilderness about half way between Brican and the lake, by a tract called Yea-chilleach, or the Old Wife's Bog.

"In one of the defiles of this by-road, the men of the country at that time hung upon the rear of the invading enemy, and shot one of Cromwell's men, whose grave marks the scene of action, and gives name to that pass.† In revenge of this insult, the soldiers resolved to plunder the island, to violate the women, and put the children to death. With this brutal intention, one of the party more expert than the rest, swam towards the island, to fetch the boat to his comrades, which had carried the women to their asylum, and lay moored in one of the creeks. His companions stood on the shore of the main land, in full view of all that was to pass, waiting anxiously for his return with the boat. But, just as the swimmer had got to the nearest point of the island, and was laying hold of a black rock, to get on shore, a heroine, who stood on the very point where he meant to land, hastily snatching a dagger from below her apron, with one stroke severed his head from the body. His party seeing this disaster, and relinquishing all future hope of revenge or conquest, made the best of their way out of their perilous situation. This amazon's great-grandson lives at Bridge of Turk, who, besides others, attests the anecdote."—*Sketch of the Scenery near Callender*. Stirling, 1806, p. 20. I have only to add to this account, that the heroine's name was Helen Stuart.

5. And Snowdoun's knight is Scotland's king.—P. 160.

This discovery will probably remind the reader of the beautiful Arabian tale of *Il Bondocani*. Yet the incident is not borrowed from that elegant story, but from Scottish tradition. James V, of whom we are treating, was a monarch whose good and benevolent intentions often rendered his romantic freaks venial, if not respectable, since, from his anxious attention to the interests of the lower and most oppressed class of his subjects, he was, as we have seen, popularly termed the *king of the commons*. For the purpose of seeing that justice was regularly administered, and frequently from the less justifiable motive of gallantry, he used to traverse the vicinage of his several palaces in various disguises. The two excellent comic songs, entitled "The Gaberlunzie Man," and "We'll gae nae mair a roving," are said to have been founded upon the success of his amorous adventures when travelling in the disguise of a beggar. The latter is perhaps the best comic ballad in any language.

Another adventure, which had nearly cost James his life, is said to have taken place at the village of Cramond, near Edinburgh, where he had rendered his addresses acceptable to a pretty girl of the lower rank. Four or five persons, whether

Scottish irony. "*January* 17th, 1687.—Reid the mountebank is received into the popish church, and one of his blackamores was persuaded to accept of baptism from the popish priests, and to turn christian papist; which was a great trophy: he was called James, after the king and chancellor, and the Apostle James."—Ibid, p. 440.

* That at the eastern extremity of Loch Katrine, so often mentioned in the text.

† Beallach an duine.

relations or lovers of his mistress is uncertain, beset the disguised monarch, as he returned from his rendezvous. Naturally gallant, and an admirable master of his weapon, the king took post on the high and narrow bridge over the Almond river, and defended himself bravely with his sword. A peasant, who was threshing in a neighbouring barn, came out upon the noise, and, whether moved by compassion or by natural gallantry, took the weaker side, and laid about with his flail so effectually, as to disperse the assailants, well threshed, even according to the letter. He then conducted the king into his barn, where his guest requested a basin and towel, to remove the stains of the broil. This being procured with difficulty, James employed himself in learning what was the summit of his deliverer's earthly wishes, and found that they were bounded by the desire of possessing, in property, the farm of Braehead, upon which he laboured as a bondsman. The lands chanced to belong to the crown; and James directed him to come to the palace of Holy-Rood, and inquire for the gudeman (*i. e.* farmer) of Ballenguich, a name by which he was known in his excursions, and which answered to the *Il Bondocani* of Haroun Alraschid. He presented himself accordingly, and found, with due astonishment, that he had saved his monarch's life, and that he was to be gratified with a crown-charter of the lands of Braehead, under the service of presenting an ewer, basin, and towel, for the king to wash his hands, when he shall happen to pass the bridge of Cramond. This person was ancestor of the Howisons, of Braehead, in Mid-Lothian, a respectable family, who continue to hold the lands (now passed into the female line) under the same tenure.

Another of James's frolics is thus narrated by Mr. Campbell, from the Statistical Account. "Being once benighted when out a hunting, and separated from his attendants, he happened to enter a cottage in the midst of a moor, at the foot of the Ochil hills, near Alloa, where, unknown, he was kindly received. In order to regale their unexpected guest, the *gudeman* (*i. e.* landlord, farmer) desired the *gudewife* to fetch the hen that roosted nearest the cock, which is always the plumpest, for the stranger's supper. The king, highly pleased with his night's lodging and hospitable entertainment, told mine host, at parting, that he should be glad to return his civility, and requested that the first time he came to Stirling he would call at the castle, and inquire for the *gudeman of Ballenguich*. Donaldson, the landlord, did not fail to call on the *gudeman of Ballenguich*, when his astonishment at finding that the king had been his guest afforded no small amusement to the merry monarch and his courtiers; and, to carry on the pleasantry, he was thenceforth designated by James with the title of king of the moors, which name and designation have descended from father to son ever since, and they have continued in possession of the identical spot, the property of Mr. Erskine, of Mar, till very lately, when this gentleman, with reluctance, turned out the descendant and representative of the king of the moors, on account of his majesty's invincible indolence, and great dislike to reform or innovation of any kind, although, from the spirited example of his neighbour tenants on the same estate, he is convinced similar exertion would promote his advantage."

The author requests permission yet farther to verify the subject of his poem, by an extract from the genealogical work of Buchanan of Auchmar, upon Scottish surnames.

"This John Buchanan of Auchmar and Arnpryor was afterwards termed king of Kippen,* upon the following account: King James V, a very sociable, debonair prince, residing at Stirling, in Buchanan of Arnpryor's time, carriers were very frequently passing along the common road, being near Arnpryor's house, with necessaries for the use of the king's family; and he, having some extraordinary occasion, ordered one of these carriers to leave his load at his house, and he would pay him for it: which the carrier refused to do, telling him he was the king's carrier, and his load for his majesty's use; to which Arnpryor seemed to have small regard, compelling the carrier, in the end, to leave his load, telling him, if king James was king of Scotland, he was king of Kippen, so that it was reasonable he should share with his neighbour king in some of these loads, so frequently carried that road. The carrier representing this usage, and telling the story, as Arnpryor spoke it, to some of the king's servants, it came at length to his majesty's ears, who, shortly thereafter, with a few attendants, came to visit his neighbour king, who was in the mean time at dinner. King James having sent a servant to demand access, was denied the same by a tall fellow with a battle-axe, who stood porter at the gate, telling, there could be no access till dinner was over. This answer not satisfying the king, he sent to demand access a second time; upon which he was desired by the porter to desist, otherwise he would find cause to repent his rudeness. His majesty finding this method would not do, desired the porter to tell his master that the goodman of Ballageigh desired to speak with the king of Kippen. The porter telling Arnpryor so much, he, in all humble manner, came and received the king, and having entertained him with much sumptuousness and jollity, became so agreeable to king James, that he allowed him to take so much of any provision he found carrying that road as he had occasion for; and seeing he made the first visit, desired Arnpryor in a few days to return him a second to Stirling, which he performed, and continued in very much favour with the king, always thereafter being termed king of Kippen while he lived."—Buchanan's *Essay upon the family of Buchanan*. Edin. 1775, 8vo. p. 74.

The readers of Ariosto must give credit for the amiable features with which he is represented, since he is generally considered as the prototype of Zerbino, the most interesting hero of the Orlando Furioso.

6. ——————Stirling's tower
Of yore the name of Snowdoun claims.—P. 160.

William of Worcester, who wrote about the middle of the fifteenth century, calls Stirling castle Snowdoun. Sir David Lindsay bestows the same epithet upon it in his complaint of the Papingo:

Adieu, fair Snawdoun, with thy towers high,
Thy chapel-royal, park, and table round;
May, June, and July, would I dwell in thee,
Were I a man, to hear the birdis sound,
Whilk doth again' thy royal rock rebound.

Mr. Chalmers, in his late excellent edition of sir David Lindsay's works, has refuted the chimerical derivation of Snawdoun from *snedding*, or cutting. It was probably derived from the romantic legend which connected Stirling with king Arthur, to which the mention of the Round Table

* A small district of Perthshire.

gives countenance. The ring within which justs were formerly practised, in the castle park, is still called the Round Table. Snawdoun is the official title of one of the Scottish heralds, whose epithets seem in all countries to have been fantastically adopted from ancient history or romance.

It appears from the preceding note, that the real name by which James was actually distinguished in his private excursions, was the goodman of Ballenguich; derived from a steep pass leading up to the castle of Stirling, so called. But the epithet would not have suited poetry, and would besides at once, and prematurely, have announced the plot to many of my countrymen, among whom the traditional stories above mentioned are still current.

The author has to apologise for the inadvertent appropriation of a whole line from the tragedy of Douglas,

"I hold the first who strikes, my foe."

Rokeby;

A POEM.

TO JOHN B. S. MORRITT, Esq.

THIS POEM, THE SCENE OF WHICH IS LAID IN HIS BEAUTIFUL DEMESNE OF ROKEBY, IS INSCRIBED, IN TOKEN OF SINCERE FRIENDSHIP, BY WALTER SCOTT.

ADVERTISEMENT.

The scene of the poem is laid at Rokeby, near Greta-bridge, in Yorkshire, and shifts to the adjacent fortress of Barnard castle, and to other places in that vicinity.

The time occupied by the action is a space of five days, three of which are supposed to elapse between the end of the fifth and beginning of the sixth canto.

The date of the supposed events is immediately subsequent to the great battle of Marston-moor, 3d July, 1644. This period of public confusion has been chosen, without any purpose of combining the fable with the military or political events of the civil war, but only as affording a degree of probability to the fictitious narrative now presented to the public.

ROKEBY.

CANTO I.

I.

The moon is in her summer glow,
But hoarse and high the breezes blow,
And, racking o'er her face, the cloud
Varies the tincture of her shroud;
On Barnard's towers,[1] and Tees's stream,
She changes as a guilty dream,
When conscience, with remorse and fear,
Goads sleeping fancy's wild career.
Her light seemed now the blush of shame,
Seemed now fierce anger's darker flame,
Shifting that shade, to come and go,
Like apprehension's hurried glow;
Then sorrow's livery dims the air,
And dies in darkness, like despair.
Such varied hues the warder sees
Reflected from the woodland Tees,
Then from old Baliol's tower looks forth,
Sees the clouds mustering in the north,
Hears, upon turret-roof and wall,
By fits the plashing rain-drop fall,
Lists to the breeze's boding sound,
And wraps his shaggy mantle round.

II.

Those towers, which, in the changeful gleam
Throw murky shadows on the stream,
Those towers of Barnard hold a guest,
The emotions of whose troubled breast,
In wild and strange confusion driven,
Rival the flitting rack of heaven.
Ere sleep stern Oswald's senses tied,
Oft had he changed his weary side,
Composed his limbs, and vainly sought
By effort strong to banish thought.
Sleep came at length, but with a train
Of feelings true and fancies vain,
Mingling, in wild disorder cast,
The expected future with the past.
Conscience, anticipating time,
Already rues the unacted crime,
And calls her furies forth, to shake
The sounding scourge and hissing snake;
While her poor victim's outward throes
Bear witness to his mental woes,
And show what lesson may be read
Beside a sinner's restless bed.

III.

Thus Oswald's labouring feelings trace
Strange changes in his sleeping face,
Rapid and ominous as these
With which the moon-beams tinge the Tees.
There might be seen of shame the blush,
There anger's dark and fiercer flush,
While the perturbed sleeper's hand
Seemed grasping dagger-knife, or brand.
Relaxed that grasp, the heavy sigh,
The tear in the half-opening eye,
The pallid cheek and brow, confessed
That grief was busy in his breast;
Nor paused that mood—a sudden start
Impelled the life-blood from the heart;
Features convulsed, and mutterings dread,
Show terror reigns in sorrow's stead;
That pang the painful slumber broke,
And Oswald, with a start, awoke.

IV.

He woke, and feared again to close
His eyelids in such dire repose;
He woke,—to watch the lamp, and tell
From hour to hour the castle bell,
Or listen to the owlet's cry,
Or the sad breeze that whistles by,
Or catch, by fits, the tuneless rhyme
With which the warder cheats the time,
And envying think how, when the sun
Bids the poor soldier's watch be done,
Couched on his straw, and fancy free,
He sleeps like careless infancy.

V.

Far townward sounds a distant tread,
And Oswald, starting from his bed,

Without a health, or pledge, or word
Of meet and social reverence said,
Deeply he drank, and fiercely fed;
As free from ceremony's sway,
As famished wolf that tears his prey.

VII.

With deep impatience, tinged with fear,
His host beheld him gorge his cheer,
And quaff the full carouse, that lent
His brow a fiercer hardiment.
Now Oswald stood a space aside,
Now paced the room with hasty stride,
In feverish agony to learn
Tidings of deep and dread concern,

Cursing each moment that his guest
Protracted o'er his ruffian feast.
Yet, viewing with alarm, at last,
The end of that uncouth repast,
Almost he seemed their haste to rue,
As, at his sign, his train withdrew,
And left him with the stranger, free
To question of his mystery.
Then did his silence long proclaim
A struggle between fear and shame.

VIII.

Much in the stranger's mien appears,
To justify suspicious fears.
On his dark face a scorching clime,
And toil, had done the work of time,[4]
Roughened the brow, the temples bared,
And sable hairs with silver shared,

Clogged by gross [illegible],
Still knew his daring soul to soar,
And mastery o'er the mind he bore;
For meaner guilt, or heart less hard,
Quailed beneath Bertram's bold regard.
And this felt Oswald, while in vain
He strove, by many a winding train,
To lure his sullen guest to show,
Unasked, the news he longed to know,
While on far other subject hung
His heart, than faltered from his tongue.
Yet nought for that his guest did deign
To note or spare his secret pain,
But still, in stern and stubborn sort,
Returned him answer dark and short,

gives countenance. The ring within which justs were formerly practised, in the castle park, is still called the Round Table. Snawdoun is the official title of one of the Scottish heralds, whose epithets seem in all countries to have been fantastically adopted from ancient history or romance.

It appears from the preceding note, that the real name by which James was actually distinguished in his private excursions, was the goodman of Ballenguich; derived from a steep pass leading up to the castle of Stirling, so called. But the epithet would not have suited poetry, and would besides at once, and prematurely, have announced the plot to many of my countrymen, among whom the traditional stories above mentioned are still current.

The author has to apologise for the inadvertent appropriation of a whole line from the tragedy of Douglas,

"I hold the first who strikes, my foe."

Rokeby;

A POEM

Goads sleeping fancy's wild career.
Her light seemed now the blush of shame,
Seemed now fierce anger's darker flame,
Shifting that shade, to come and go,
Like apprehension's hurried glow;
Then sorrow's livery dims the air,
And dies in darkness, like despair.
Such varied hues the warder sees
Reflected from the woodland Tees,
Then from old Baliol's tower looks forth,
Sees the clouds mustering in the north,
Hears, upon turret-roof and wall,
By fits the plashing rain-drop fall,
Lists to the breeze's boding sound,
And wraps his shaggy mantle round.

With which the moon-beams tinge the Tees.
There might be seen of shame the blush,
There anger's dark and fiercer flush,
While the perturbed sleeper's hand
Seemed grasping dagger-knife, or brand.
Relaxed that grasp, the heavy sigh,
The tear in the half-opening eye,
The pallid cheek and brow, confessed
That grief was busy in his breast;
Nor paused that mood—a sudden start
Impelled the life-blood from the heart;
Features convulsed, and mutterings dread,
Show terror reigns in sorrow's stead;
That pang the painful slumber broke,
And Oswald, with a start, awoke.

IV.

He woke, and feared again to close
His eyelids in such dire repose;
He woke,—to watch the lamp, and tell
From hour to hour the castle bell,
Or listen to the owlet's cry,
Or the sad breeze that whistles by,
Or catch, by fits, the tuneless rhyme
With which the warder cheats the time,
And envying think how, when the sun
Bids the poor soldier's watch be done,
Couched on his straw, and fancy free,
He sleeps like careless infancy.

V.

Far townward sounds a distant tread,
And Oswald, starting from his bed,
Hath caught it, though no human ear,
Unsharpened by revenge and fear,
Could e'er distinguish horse's clank,[2]
Until it reached the castle-bank.
Now nigh and plain the sound appears,
The warder's challenge now he hears.
Then clanking chains and levers tell,
That o'er the moat the drawbridge fell,
And, in the castle court below,
Voices are heard, and torches glow,
As marshalling the stranger's way,
Straight for the room where Oswald lay;
The cry was—"Tidings from the host,
Of weight—a messenger comes post."
Stifling the tumult of his breast,
His answer Oswald thus expressed—
"Bring food and wine, and trim the fire;
Admit the stranger, and retire."—

VI.

The stranger came with heavy stride;
The morion's plumes his visage hide,
And the buff coat, in ample fold,
Mantles his form's gigantic mould.[3]
Full slender answer deigned he
To Oswald's anxious courtesy,
But marked, by a disdainful smile,
He saw and scorned the petty wile,
When Oswald changed the torch's place,
Anxious that on the soldier's face
Its partial lustre might be thrown,
To show his looks, yet hide his own.
His guest, the while, laid slow aside
The ponderous cloak of tough bull's hide,
And to the torch glanced broad and clear
The corslet of a cuirassier.
Then from his brows the casque he drew,
And from the dank plume dashed the dew,
From gloves of mail relieved his hands,
And spread them to the kindling brands,
And, turning to the genial board,
Without a health, or pledge, or word
Of meet and social reverence said,
Deeply he drank, and fiercely fed;
As free from ceremony's sway,
As famished wolf that tears his prey.

VII.

With deep impatience, tinged with fear,
His host beheld him gorge his cheer,
And quaff the full carouse, that lent
His brow a fiercer hardiment.
Now Oswald stood a space aside,
Now paced the room with hasty stride,
In feverish agony to learn
Tidings of deep and dread concern,
Cursing each moment that his guest
Protracted o'er his ruffian feast.
Yet, viewing with alarm, at last,
The end of that uncouth repast,
Almost he seemed their haste to rue,
As, at his sign, his train withdrew,
And left him with the stranger, free
To question of his mystery.
Then did his silence long proclaim
A struggle between fear and shame.

VIII.

Much in the stranger's mien appears,
To justify suspicious fears.
On his dark face a scorching clime,
And toil, had done the work of time,[4]
Roughened the brow, the temples bared,
And sable hairs with silver shared,
Yet left—what age alone could tame—
The lip of pride, the eye of flame,
The full-drawn lip that upward curled,
The eye, that seemed to scorn the world.
That lip had terror never blanched;
Ne'er in that eye had tear-drop quenched
The flash severe of swarthy glow,
That mocked at pain, and knew not wo;
Inured to danger's direst form,
Tornade and earthquake, flood and storm,
Death had he seen by sudden blow,
By wasting plague, by tortures slow,
By mine or breach, by steel or ball,
Knew all his shapes, and scorned them all.

IX.

But yet, though Bertram's hardened look,
Unmoved, could blood and danger brook,
Still worse than apathy had place
On his swart brow and callous face;
For evil passions, cherished long,
Had ploughed them with impressions strong.
All that gives gloss to sin, all gay
Light folly, passed with youth away,
But rooted stood, in manhood's hour,
The weeds of vice without their flower.
And yet the soil in which they grew,
Had it been tamed when life was new,
Had depth and vigour to bring forth
The hardier fruits of virtuous worth.
Not that, e'en then, his heart had known
The gentler feelings' kindlier tone;
But lavish waste had been refined
To bounty in his chastened mind,
And lust of gold, that waste to feed,
Been lost in love of glory's meed,
And, frantic then no more, his pride
Had ta'en fair virtue for its guide.

X.

E'en now, by conscience unrestrained,
Clogged by gross vice, by slaughter stained,
Still knew his daring soul to soar,
And mastery o'er the mind he bore;
For meaner guilt, or heart less hard,
Quailed beneath Bertram's bold regard.
And this felt Oswald, while in vain
He strove, by many a winding train,
To lure his sullen guest to show,
Unasked, the news he longed to know,
While on far other subject hung
His heart, than faltered from his tongue.
Yet nought for that his guest did deign
To note or spare his secret pain,
But still, in stern and stubborn sort,
Returned him answer dark and short,

Or started from the theme, to range
In loose digression wild and strange,
And forced the embarrassed host to buy,
By query close, direct reply.

XI.

Awhile he glozed upon the cause
Of commons, covenant, and laws,
And church reformed—but felt rebuke
Beneath grim Bertram's sneering look.
Then stammered—"Has a field been fought?
Has Bertram news of battle brought?
For sure a soldier, famed so far
In foreign fields for feats of war,
On eve of fight ne'er left the host,
Until the field were won or lost."
"Here, in your towers by circling Tees,
You, Oswald Wycliffe, rest at ease;
Why deem it strange that others come
To share such safe and easy home,
From fields where danger, death, and toil,
Are the reward of civil broil?"
"Nay, mock not, friend!—since well we know
The near advances of the foe,
To mar our northern army's work,
Encamped before beleaguered York;
Thy horse with valiant Fairfax lay,
And must have fought—how went the day?"

XII.

"Wouldst hear the tale?—On Marston heath
Met, front to front, the ranks of death;[5]
Flourished the trumpets fierce, and now
Fired was each eye, and flushed each brow;
On either side loud clamours ring,
'God and the cause!—God and the king!'
Right English all, they rushed to blows,
With nought to win, and all to lose.
I could have laughed—but lacked the time—
To see, in phrenezy sublime,
How the fierce zealots fought and bled,
For king or state, as humour led;
Some for a dream of public good,
Some for church-tippet, gown, and hood,
Draining their veins, in death to claim
A patriot's or a martyr's name.—
Led Bertram Risingham the hearts,
That countered there on adverse parts,
No superstitious fool had I
Sought El Dorados in the sky!
Chili had heard me through her states,
And Lima oped her silver gates,
Rich Mexico I had marched through,
And sacked the splendours of Peru,
Till sunk Pizarro's daring name,
And, Cortez, thine, in Bertram's fame."
—"Still from the purpose wilt thou stray!
Good gentle friend, how went the day?"

XIII.

"Good am I deemed at trumpet-sound,
And good where goblets dance the round,
Though gentle ne'er was joined, till now,
With rugged Bertram's breast and brow.—
But I resume. The battle's rage
Was like the strife which currents wage,
Where Orinoco, in his pride,
Rolls to the main no tribute tide,
But 'gainst broad ocean urges far
A rival sea of roaring war;
While, in ten thousand eddies driven,
The billows fling their foam to heaven.
And the pale pilot seeks in vain,
Where rolls the river, where the main.
E'en thus, upon the bloody field,
The eddying tides of conflict wheeled
Ambiguous, till that heart of flame,
Hot Rupert, on our squadrons came,
Hurling against our spears a line
Of gallants, fiery as their wine;
Then ours, though stubborn in their zeal,
In zeal's despite began to reel.
What wouldst thou more?—in tumult tost,
Our leaders fell, our ranks were lost.
A thousand men, who drew the sword
For both the houses and the word,
Preached forth from hamlet, grange, and down,
To curb the crosier and the crown,
Now, stark and stiff, lie stretched in gore,
And ne'er shall rail at mitre more.—
Thus fared it, when I left the fight,
With the good cause and commons' right."

XIV.

"Disastrous news!" dark Wycliffe said;
Assumed despondence bent his head,
While troubled joy was in his eye,
The well-feigned sorrow to belie.—
"Disastrous news!—when needed most,
Told ye not that your chiefs were lost?
Complete the woful tale, and say,
Who fell upon that fatal day;
What leaders of repute and name
Bought by their death a deathless fame.
If such my direst foeman's doom,
My tears shall dew his honoured tomb.—
No answer?—Friend, of all our host,
Thou know'st whom I should hate the most;
Whom thou too once were wont to hate,
Yet leav'st me doubtful of his fate."—
With look unmoved,—"Of friend or foe,
Aught," answered Bertram, "wouldst thou know
Demand in simple terms and plain,
A soldier's answer shalt thou gain;
For question dark, or riddle high,
I have nor judgment nor reply."

XV.

The wrath his art and fear suppressed
Now blazed at once in Wycliffe's breast;
And brave from man so meanly born,
Roused his hereditary scorn.
—"Wretch! hast thou paid thy bloody debt?
Philip of Mortham, lives he yet?
False to thy patron or thine oath,
Trait'rous or perjured, one or both,
Slave! hast thou kept thy promise plight,
To slay thy leader in the fight?"—
Then from his seat the soldier sprung,
And Wycliffe's hand he strongly wrung;
His grasp, as hard as glove of mail,
Forced the red blood-drop from the nail—
"A health!" he cried; and, ere he quaffed,
Flung from him Wycliffe's hand, and laughed:
—"Now, Oswald Wycliffe, speaks thy heart!
Now play'st thou well thy genuine part!
Worthy, but for thy craven fear,
Like me to roam a buccaneer.
What reck'st thou of the cause divine,
If Mortham's wealth and lands be thine?
What car'st thou for beleaguered York,
If this good hand have done its work?
Or what though Fairfax and his best
Are reddening Marston's swarthy breast,
If Philip Mortham with them lie,
Lending his life-blood to the dye?

Sit then! and as 'mid comrades free
Carousing after victory,
When tales are told of blood and fear,
That boys and women shrink to hear,
From point to point I frankly tell
The deed of death as it befel.

XVI.

"When purposed vengeance I forego,
Term me a wretch, nor deem me foe:
And when an insult I forgive,
Then brand me as a slave, and live!—
Philip of Mortham is with those
Whom Bertram Risingham calls foes;
Or whom more sure revenge attends,
If numbered with ungrateful friends.
As was his wont, ere battle glowed,
Along the marshalled ranks he rode,
And wore his vizor up the while.
I saw his melancholy smile,
When, full opposed in front, he knew
Where Rokeby's kindred banner flew.
'And thus,' he said, 'will friends divide!'—
I heard, and thought how, side by side,
We two had turned the battle's tide,
In many a well debated field,
Where Bertram's breast was Philip's shield.
I thought on Darien's deserts pale,
Where death bestrides the evening gale,
How o'er my friend my cloak I threw,
And fenceless faced the deadly dew;
I thought on Quariana's cliff,
Where, rescued from our foundering skiff,
Through the white breakers' wrath I bore
Exhausted Mortham to the shore;
And when his side an arrow found,
I sucked the Indian's venomed wound.
These thoughts like torrents rushed along,
To sweep away my purpose strong.

XVII.

"Hearts are not flint, and flints are rent;
Hearts are not steel, and steel is bent.
When Mortham bade me, as of yore,
Be near him in the battle's roar,
I scarcely saw the spears laid low,
I scarcely heard the trumpets blow;
Lost was the war in inward strife,
Debating Mortham's death or life.
'Twas then I thought, how, lured to come
As partner of his wealth and home,
Years of piratic wandering o'er,
With him I sought our native shore.
But Mortham's lord grew far estranged
From the bold hearts with whom he ranged;
Doubts, horrors, superstitious fears,
Saddened and dimmed descending years;
The wily priests their victim sought,
And damned each freeborn deed and thought.
Then must I seek another home,
My license shook his sober dome;
If gold he gave, in one wild day
I revelled thrice the sum away.
An idle outcast then I strayed,
Unfit for tillage or for trade,
Deemed, like the steel of rusted lance,
Useless and dangerous at once.
The women feared my hardy look,
At my approach the peaceful shook:
The merchant saw my glance of flame,
And locked his hoards when Bertram came;
Each child of coward peace kept far
From the neglected son of war.

XVIII.

"But civil discord gave the call,
And made my trade the trade of all.
By Mortham urged, I came again
His vassals to the fight to train.
What guerdon waited on my care?
I could not cant of creed or prayer;
Sour fanatics each trust obtained,
And I, dishonoured and disdained,
Gained but the high and happy lot,
In these poor arms to front the shot!—
All this thou know'st, thy gestures tell;
Yet hear it o'er, and mark it well.
'Tis honour bids me now relate
Each circumstance of Mortham's fate.

XIX.

"Thoughts, from the tongue that slowly part,
Glance quick as lightning through the heart.
As my spur pressed my courser's side,
Philip of Mortham's cause was tried,
And, ere the charging squadrons mixed,
His plea was cast, his doom was fixed.
I watched him through the doubtful fray,
That changed as March's moody day,
Till, like a stream that bursts its bank,
Fierce Rupert thundered on our flank.
'Twas then, 'midst tumult, smoke, and strife,
Where each man fought for death or life,
'Twas then I fired my petronel,
And Mortham, steed and rider, fell.
One dying look he upward cast,
Of wrath and anguish—'twas his last.
Think not that there I stopped to view
What of the battle should ensue;
But ere I cleared that bloody press,
Our northern horse ran masterless;
Monckton and Mitton told the news,
How troops of Roundheads choked the Ouse,
And many a bonny Scot, aghast,
Spurring his palfrey northward, past,
Cursing the day when zeal or meed
First lured their Lesley o'er the Tweed.[6]
Yet when I reached the banks of Swale,
Had rumour learned another tale;
With his barbed horse, fresh tidings say
Stout Cromwell has redeemed the day:[7]
But whether false the news, or true,
Oswald, I reck as light as you."—

XX.

Not then by Wycliffe might be shown,
How his pride startled at the tone
In which his complice, fierce and free,
Asserted guilt's equality.
In smoothest terms his speech he wove
Of endless friendship, faith, and love;
Promised and vowed in courteous sort,
But Bertram broke professions short.
"Wycliffe, be sure not here I stay!
No, scarcely till the rising day:
Warned by the legends of my youth,
I trust not an associate's truth.
Do not my native dales prolong
Of Percy Rede the tragic song,
Trained forward to his bloody fall,
By Girsonfield, that treacherous Hall?[8]
Oft, by the Pringle's haunted side,
The shepherd sees his spectre glide.
And near the spot that gave me name,
The moated mound of Risingham,
Where Reed upon her margin sees,
Sweet Woodburn's cottages and trees,

Some ancient sculptor's art has shown
An outlaw's image on the stone;[9]
Unmatched in strength, a giant he,
With quivered back, and kirtled knee;
Ask how he died, that hunter bold,
The tameless monarch of the wold,
And age and infancy can tell,
By brother's treachery he fell.—
Thus warned by legends of my youth,
I trust to no associate's truth.

XXI.

"When last we reasoned of this deed,
Nought, I bethink me, was agreed,
Or by what rule, or when, or where,
The wealth of Mortham we should share;
Then list, while I the portion name,
Our differing laws give each to claim.
Thou, vassal sworn to England's throne,
Her rules of heritage must own;
They deal thee, as to nearest heir,
Thy kinsman's lands and livings fair,
And these I yield:—do thou revere
The statutes of the buccaneer.[10]
Friend to the sea, and foeman sworn
To all that on her waves are borne,
When falls a mate in battle broil,
His comrade heirs his portioned spoil;
When dies in fight a daring foe,
He claims his wealth who struck the blow;
And either rule to me assigns
Those spoils of Indian seas and mines,
Hoarded in Mortham's caverns dark;
Ingot of gold and diamond spark,
Chalice and plate from churches borne,
And gems from shrieking beauty torn,
Each string of pearl, each silver bar,
And all the wealth of western war;
I go to search, where, dark and deep,
Those transatlantic treasures sleep.
Thou must along—for, lacking thee,
The heir will scarce find entrance free:
And then farewell, I haste to try
Each varied pleasure wealth can buy;
When cloyed each wish, these wars afford
Fresh work for Bertram's restless sword."—

XXII.

An undecided answer hung
On Oswald's hesitating tongue.
Despite his craft, he heard with awe
This ruffian stabber fix the law;
While his own troubled passions veer
Through hatred, joy, regret, and fear.
Joyed at the soul that Bertram flies,
He grudged the murderer's mighty prize,
Hated his pride's presumptuous tone,
And feared to wend with him alone.
At length, that middle course to steer,
To cowardice and craft so dear,
"His charge," he said, "would ill allow
His absence from the fortress now;
Wilfred on Bertram should attend,
His son should journey with his friend."

XXIII.

Contempt kept Bertram's anger down,
And wreathed to savage smile his frown.
"Wilfrid, or thou—'tis one to me,
Whichever bears the golden key.
Yet think not but I mark, and smile
To mark, thy poor and selfish wile!
If injury from me you fear,
What, Oswald Wycliffe, shields thee here?
I've sprung from walls more high than these,
I've swam through deeper streams than Tees.
Might I not stab thee, ere one yell
Could rouse the distant sentinel?
Start not—it is not my design,
But, if it were, weak fence were thine;
And, trust me, that, in time of need,
This hand hath done more desperate deed.—
Go, haste and rouse thy slumbering son;
Time calls, and I must needs be gone."

XXIV.

Nought of his sire's ungenerous part
Polluted Wilfrid's gentle heart;
A heart, too soft from early life
To hold with fortune needful strife.
His sire, while yet a hardier race
Of numerous sons were Wycliffe's grace,
On Wilfrid set contemptuous brand,
For feeble heart and forceless hand;
But a fond mother's care and joy
Were centered in her sickly boy.
No touch of childhood's frolic mood
Showed the elastic spring of blood;
Hour after hour he loved to pore
On Shakspeare's rich and varied lore,
But turned from martial scenes and light,
From Falstaff's feast and Percy's fight,
To ponder Jacques's moral strain,
And muse with Hamlet, wise in vain;
And weep himself to soft repose
O'er gentle Desdemona's woes.

XXV.

In youth, he sought not pleasures found
By youth in horse, and hawk, and hound,
But loved the quiet joys that wake
By lonely stream and silent lake;
In Deepdale's solitude to lie,
Where all is cliff, and copse, and sky:
To climb Catcastle's dizzy peak,
Or lone Pendragon's mound to seek.
Such was his wont; and there his dream
Soared on some wild fantastic theme,
Of faithful love, or ceaseless spring,
Till contemplation's wearied wing
The enthusiast could no more sustain,
And sad he sunk to earth again.

XXVI.

He loved—as many a lay can tell,
Preserved in Stanmore's lonely dell;
For his was minstrel's skill, he caught
The art unteachable, untaught;
He loved—his soul did nature frame
For love, and fancy nursed the flame;
Vainly he loved—for seldom swain
Of such soft mould is loved again:
Silent he loved—in every gaze
Was passion, friendship in his phrase.
So mused his life away—till died
His brethren all, their father's pride.
Wilfrid is now the only heir
Of all his stratagems and care,
And destined, darkling, to pursue
Ambition's maze by Oswald's clue.

XXVII.

Wilfrid must love and woo the bright
Matilda, heir of Rokeby's knight.
To love her was an easy hest,
The secret empress of his breast;
To woo her was a harder task
To one that durst not hope or ask;

Yet all Matilda could she gave
In pity to her gentle slave;
Friendship, esteem, and fair regard,
And praise, the poet's best reward!
She read the tales his taste approved,
And sung the lays he framed or loved;
Yet, loth to nurse the fatal flame
Of hopeless love in friendship's name,
In kind caprice she oft withdrew
The favouring glance to friendship due,
Then grieved to see her victim's pain,
And gave the dangerous smiles again.

XXVIII.

So did the suit of Wilfrid stand,
When war's loud summons waked the land.
Three banners, floating o'er the Tees,
The wo-foreboding peasant sees.
In concert oft they braved of old
The bordering Scot's incursion bold;
Frowning defiance in their pride,
Their vassals now and lords divide.
From his fair hall on Greta banks,
The knight of Rokeby led his ranks,
To aid the valiant northern earls,
Who drew the sword for royal Charles;
Mortham, by marriage near allied,—
His sister had been Rokeby's bride,
Though long before the civil fray,
In peaceful grave the lady lay,—
Philip of Mortham raised his band,
And marched at Fairfax's command;
While Wycliffe, bound by many a train
Of kindred art with wily Vane,
Less prompt to brave the bloody field,
Made Barnard's battlements his shield,
Secured them with his Lunedale powers,
And for the commons held the towers.

XXIX.

The lovely heir of Rokeby's knight
Waits in his halls the event of fight;
For England's war revered the claim
Of every unprotected name,
And spared, amid its fiercest rage,
Childhood, and womanhood, and age.
But Wilfrid, son to Rokeby's foe,
Must the dear privilege forego,
By Greta's side, in evening gray,
To steal upon Matilda's way,
Striving, with fond hypocrisy,
For careless step and vacant eye;
Calming each anxious look and glance,
To give the meeting all to chance,
Or framing as a fair excuse,
The book, the pencil, or the muse;
Something to give, to sing, to say,
Some modern tale, some ancient lay.
Then, while the longed-for minutes last,—
Ah! minutes quickly over past!—
Recording each expression free,
Of kind or careless courtesy,
Each friendly look, each softer tone,
As food for fancy when alone.
All this is o'er but still, unseen,
Wilfrid may lurk in Eastwood green,
To watch Matilda's wonted round,
While springs his heart at every sound.
She comes!—'tis but a passing sight,
Yet serves to cheat his weary night:
She comes not—he will wait the hour,
When her lamp lightens in the tower;
'Tis something yet, if, as she past,
Her shade is o'er the lattice cast.
"What is my life, my hope?" he said;
"Alas! a transitory shade."

XXX.

Thus wore his life, though reason strove
For mastery in vain with love,
Forcing upon his thoughts the sum
Of present wo and ills to come,
While still he turned impatient ear
From truth's intrusive voice severe.
Gentle, indifferent, and subdued,
In all but this, unmoved he viewed
Each outward change of ill and good:
But Wilfrid, docile, soft, and mild,
Was fancy's spoiled and wayward child;
In her bright car she bade him ride,
With one fair form to grace his side,
Or, in some wild and lone retreat,
Flung her high spells around his seat,
Bathed in her dews his languid head,
Her fairy mantle o'er him spread,
For him her opiates gave to flow,
Which he who tastes can ne'er forego,
And placed him in her circle, free
From every stern reality,
Till, to the visionary, seem
Her day-dreams truth, and truth a dream.

XXXI.

Wo to the youth whom fancy gains,
Winning from reason's hand the reins,
Pity and wo! for such a mind
Is soft, contemplative, and kind;
And wo to those who train such youth,
And spare to press the rights of truth,
The mind to strengthen and anneal,
While on the stithy glows the steel!
O teach him, while your lessons last,
To judge the present by the past;
Remind him of each wish pursued,
How rich it glowed with promised good;
Remind him of each wish enjoyed,
How soon his hopes possession cloyed!
Tell him, we play unequal game,
When'er we shoot by fancy's aim;
And, ere he strip him for her race,
Show the conditions of the chase.
Two sisters by the goal are set,
Cold disappointment and regret;
One disenchants the winner's eyes,
And strips of all its worth the prize,
While one augments its gaudy show,
More to enhance the loser's wo.
The victor sees his fairy gold
Transformed, when won, to drossy mould;
But still the vanquished mourns his loss,
And rues, as gold, that glittering dross.

XXXII.

More would'st thou know—yon tower survey,
Yon couch unpressed since parting day,
Yon untrimmed lamp, whose yellow gleam
Is mingling with the cold moonbeam,
And yon thin form! the hectic red
On his pale cheek unequal spread;
The head reclined, the loosened hair,
The limbs relaxed, the mournful air.
See, he looks up; a woful smile
Lightens his wo-worn cheek a while;
'Tis fancy wakes some idle thought,
To gild the ruins she has wrought;

For, like the bat of Indian brakes,
Her pinions fan the wound she makes,
And soothing thus the dreamer's pain,
She drinks his life-blood from the vein.
Now to the lattice turn his eyes,
Vain hope! to see the sun arise.
The moon with clouds is still o'ercast,
Still howls by fits the stormy blast;
Another hour must wear away,
Ere the east kindle into day,
And hark! to waste that weary hour,
He tries the minstrel's magic power.

XXXIII.

SONG—TO THE MOON.

Hail to thy cold and clouded beam,
Pale pilgrim of the troubled sky!
Hail, though the mists that o'er thee stream
Lend to thy brow their sullen dye!
How should thy pure and peaceful eye
Untroubled view our scenes below,
Or how a tearless beam supply
To light a world of war and wo!

Fair queen! I will not blame thee now,
As once by Greta's fairy side,
Each little cloud that dimmed thy brow
Did then an angel's beauty hide;
And of the shades I then could chide,
Still are the thoughts to memory dear,
For, while a softer strain I tried,
They hid my blush and calmed my fear.

Then did I swear thy ray serene
Was formed to light some lonely dell,
By two fond lovers only seen,
Reflected from the crystel well;
Or sleeping on their mossy cell,
Or quivering on the lattice bright,
Or glancing on their couch, to tell
How swiftly wanes the summer night!

XXXIV.

He starts—a step at this lone hour!
A voice! his father seeks the tower,
With hagard look and troubled sense,
Fresh from his dreadful conference.
"Wilfrid! what, not to sleep addrest?
Thou hast no cares to chase thy rest.
Mortham has fallen on Marston-moor;
Bertram brings warrant to secure
His treasures, bought by spoil and blood,
For the state's use and public good.
The menials will thy voice obey;
Let his commission have its way,
In every point, in every word."
Then, in a whisper, "take thy sword!
Bertram is—what I must not tell.
I hear his hasty step—farewell!"

CANTO II.

I.

Far in the chambers of the west,
The gale had sighed itself to rest;
The moon was cloudless now and clear,
But pale, and soon to disappear.
The thin gray clouds waxed dimly light
On Brusleton and Houghton height;
And the rich dale, that eastward lay,
Waited the wakening touch of day,
To give its woods and cultured plain,
And towers and spires, to light again.
But, westward, Stanmore's shapeless swell,
And Lunedale wild, and Kelton-fell,
And rock-begirdled Gilmanscar,
And Arkingarth, lay dark afar;
While, as a livelier twilight falls,
Emerge proud Barnard's bannered walls.
High crowned he sits, in dawning pale,
The sovereign of the lovely vale.

II.

What prospects from his watch-tower high,
Gleam gradual on the warder's eye!
Far sweeping to the east, he sees
Down his deep woods the course of Tees,[1]
And tracks his wanderings by the steam
Of summer vapours from the stream;
And ere he pace his destined hour
By Brackenbury's dungeon-tower,
These silver mists shall melt away,
And dew the woods with glittering spray.
Then in broad lustre shall be shown
That mighty trench of living stone,
And each huge trunk that, from the side,
Reclines him o'er the darksome tide,
Where Tees, full many a fathom low,
Wears with his rage no common foe;
For pebbly bank, nor sand-bed here,
Nor clay-mound, checks his fierce career,
Condemned to mine a channelled way,
O'er solid sheets of marble gray.

III.

Nor Tees alone, in dawning bright,
Shall rush upon the ravished sight;
But many a tributary stream,
Each from its own dark dell shall gleam;
Staindrop, who, from her sylvan bowers,
Salutes proud Raby's battled towers;
The rural brook of Eglistone,
And Balder, named from Odin's son;
And Greta, to whose banks ere long
We lead the lovers of the song;
And silver Lune, from Stanmore wild,
And fairy Thorsgill's murmuring child;
And last and least, but loveliest still,
Romantic Deepdale's slender rill.
Who in that dim-wood glen hath strayed,
Yet longed for Roslin's magic glade?
Who, wandering there, had sought to change
E'en for that vale so stern and strange,
Where Cartland's crags, fantastic rent,
Through her green copse like spires are sent?
Yet, Albyn, yet the praise be thine,
Thy scenes and story to combine!
Thou bid'st him, who by Roslin strays,
List to the deeds of other days;
'Mid Cartland's crags thou show'st the cave,
The refuge of thy champion brave.
Giving each rock its storied tale,
Pouring a lay for every dale,
Knitting, as with a moral band,
Thy native legends with thy land,
To lend each scene the interest high
Which genius beams from beauty's eye.

IV.

Bertram awaited not the sight
Which sunrise shows from Barnard's height,
But from the towers, preventing day,
With Wilfrid early took his way.
While misty dawn, and moon-beam pale,
Still mingled in the silent dale.
By Barnard's bridge of stately stone,
The southern bank of Tees they won;
Their winding path then eastward cast,
And Eglistone's gray ruins[2] past;

Each on his own deep visions bent,
Silent and sad they onward went.
Well may you think that Bertram's mood
To Wilfrid savage seemed and rude;
Well may you think, bold Risingham
Held Wilfrid trivial, poor, and tame:
And small the intercourse, I ween,
Such uncongenial souls between.

V.

Stern Bertram shunned the nearer way,
Through Rokeby's park and chase that lay,
And, skirting high the valley's ridge,
They crossed by Greta's ancient bridge,
Descending where her waters wind
Free for a space and unconfined,
As, 'scaped from Brignal's dark wood glen,
She seeks wild Mortham's deeper den.
There, as his eye glanced o'er the mound,
Raised by that legion long renowned,
Whose votive shrine asserts their claim,
Of pious, faithful, conquering fame,[3]
"Stern sons of war!" sad Wilfrid sighed,
"Behold the boast of Roman pride!
What now of all your toils are known?
A grassy trench, a broken stone!"
This to himself, for moral strain
To Bertram were addressed in vain.

VI.

Of different mood, a deeper sigh
Awoke, when Rokeby's turrets high[4]
Were northward in the dawning seen
To rear them o'er the thicket green.
O then, though Spencer's self had strayed
Beside him through the lovely glade,
Lending his rich luxuriant glow
Of fancy, all its charms to show,
Pointing the stream rejoicing free,
As captive set at liberty,
Flashing her sparkling waves abroad,
And clamouring joyful on her road;
Pointing where, up the sunny banks,
The trees retire in scattered ranks,
Save where, advanced before the rest,
On knoll or hillock rears his crest—
Lonely and huge, the giant oak—
As champions, when their band is broke,
Stand forth to guard the rearward post,
The bulwark of the scattered host—
All this, and more, might Spencer say,
Yet waste in vain his magic lay,
While Wilfrid eyed the distant tower,
Whose lattice lights Matilda's bower.

VII.

The open vale is soon past o'er,
Rokeby, though nigh, is seen no more:
Sinking 'mid Greta's thickets deep,
A wild and darker course they keep,
A stern and lone, yet lovely road,
As e'er the foot of minstrel trode![5]
Broad shadows o'er their passage fell,
Deeper and narrower grew the dell;
It seemed some mountain, rent and riven,
A channel for the stream had given,
So high the cliffs of limestone gray
Hung beetling o'er the torrent's way,
Yielding, along their rugged base,
A flinty footpath's niggard space,
Where he, who winds 'twixt rock and wave,
May hear the headlong torrent rave,
And like a steed in frantic fit,
That flings the froth from curb and bit,
May view her chafe her waves to spray,
O'er every rock that bars her way,
Till foam-globes on her eddies rude,
Thick as the schemes of human pride,
That down life's current drive amain,
As frail, as frothy, and as vain!

VIII.

The cliffs, that rear the haughty head
High o'er the river's darksome bed,
Were now all naked, wild, and gray,
Now waving all with greenwood spray,
Here trees to every crevice clung,
And o'er the dell their branches hung;
And there, all splintered and uneven,
The shivered rocks ascend to heaven.
Oft, too, the ivy swathed their breast,
And wreathed its garland round their crest,
Or from their spires bade loosely flare
Its tendrils in the middle air,
As pennons wont to wave of old,
O'er the high feast of baron bold,
When revelled loud the feudal rout,
And the arched halls returned their shout.
Such and more wild is Greta's roar,
And such the echoes from her shore,
And so the ivied banner's gleam
Waved wildly o'er the brawling stream.

IX.

Now from the stream the rocks recede,
But leave between no sunny mead,
No, nor the spot of pebbly sand,
Oft found by such a mountain stand,
Forming such warm and dry retreat,
As fancy deems the lonely seat,
Where hermit, wandering from his cell,
His rosary might love to tell.
But here, 'twixt rock and river grew
A dismal grove of sable yew,
With whose sad tints were mingled seen
The blighted fir's sepulchral green,
Seemed that the trees their shadows cast,
The earth that nourished them to blast,
For never knew that swarthy grove
The verdant hue that fairies love;
Nor wilding green, nor woodland flower,
Arose within its baleful bower;
The dank and sable earth receives
Its only carpet from the leaves,
That, from the withering branches cast,
Bestrewed the ground with every blast.
Though now the sun was o'er the hill,
In this dark spot 'twas twilight still,
Save that on Greta's farther side
Some straggling beams through copse-wood glide,
And wild and savage contrast made
That dingle's deep and funeral shade,
With the bright tints of early day,
Which, glimmering through the ivy spray,
On the opposing summit lay.

X.

The lated peasant shunned the dell,
For superstition wont to tell
Of many a grisly sound and sight,
Scaring its path at dead of night.
When christmas logs blaze high and wide,
Such wonders speed the festal tide,
While curiosity and fear,
Pleasure and pain, sit crouching near,
Till childhood's cheek no longer glows,
And village maidens lose the rose.

The thrilling interest rises higher,
The circle closes nigh and nigher,
And shuddering glance is cast behind,
As louder moans the wintry wind.
Believe, that fitting scene was laid
For such wild tales in Mortham's glade;
For who had seen on Greta's side,
By that dim light, fierce Bertram stride;
In such a spot, at such an hour,
If touched by superstition's power,
Might well have deemed that hell had given
A murderer's ghost to upper heaven,
While Wilfrid's form had seemed to glide
Like his pale victim by his side.

XI.

Nor think to village swains alone
Are these unearthly terrors known;
For not to rank nor sex confined
Is this vain ague of the mind.
Hearts firm as steel, as marble hard,
'Gainst faith, and love, and pity barred,
Have quaked like aspin leaves in May,
Beneath its universal sway.
Bertram had listed many a tale
Of wonder in his native dale,
That in his secret soul retained
The credence they in childhood gained;
Nor less his wild and venturous youth
Believed in every legend's truth,
Learned when beneath the tropic gale
Full swelled the vessel's steady sail,
And the broad Indian moon her light
Poured on the watch of middle night,
When seamen love to hear and tell
Of portent, prodigy, and spell;
What gales are sold on Lapland's shore,[6]
How whistle rash bids tempest roar;[7]
Of witch, of mermaid, and of sprite,
Of Erick's cap and Elmo's light;[8]
Or of that phantom ship, whose form
Shoots like a meteor through the storm,
When the dark scud comes driving hard,
And lowered is every topsail yard,
And canvass, wove in earthly looms,
No more to brave the storm presumes!
Then, 'mid the war of sea and sky,
Top and top-gallant hoisted high,
Full-spread and crowded every sail,
The demon-frigate[9] braves the gale;
And well the doomed spectators know,
The harbinger of wreck and wo.

XII.

Then too were told, in stifled tone,
Marvels and omens all their own;
How, by some desert isle or key,[10]
Where Spaniards wrought their cruelty,
Or where the savage pirate's mood
Repaid it home in deeds of blood,
Strange nightly sounds of wo and fear
Appalled the listening buccaneer,
Whose light-armed shallop anchored lay
In ambush by the lonely bay.
The groan of grief, the shriek of pain,
Ring from the moonlight groves of cane;
The fierce adventurer's heart they scare,
Who wearies memory for a prayer,
Curses the road-stead, and with gale
Of early morning lifts the sail,
To give, in thirst of blood and prey,
A legend for another bay.

XIII.

Thus, as a man, a youth, a child,
Trained in the mystic and the wild,
With this on Bertram's soul at times
Rushed a dark feeling of his crimes;
Such to his troubled soul their form,
As the pale death-ship to the storm,
And such their omen dim and dread,
As shrieks and voices of the dead.
That pang, whose transitory force
Hovered 'twixt horror and remorse;
That pang, perchance, his bosom pressed,
As Wilfrid sudden he addressed.
"Wilfrid, this glen is never trod
Until the sun rides high abroad;
Yet twice have I beheld to-day
A form that seemed to dog our way;
Twice from my glance it seemed to flee,
And shroud itself by cliff or tree;
How think'st thou? is our path waylaid,
Or hath they sire my trust betrayed?
If so"—Ere, starting from his dream,
That turned upon a gentler theme,
Wilfrid had roused him to reply,
Bertram sprung forward, shouting high,
"What'er thou art, thou now shalt stand!"
And forth he darted, sword in hand.

XIV.

As bursts the levin in its wrath,
He shot him down the sounding path:
Rock, wood, and stream, rung wildly out,
To his loud step and savage shout.
Seems that the object of his race
Hath scaled the cliffs; his frantic chase
Sidelong he turns, and now 'tis bent
Right up the rock's tall battlement;
Straining each sinew to ascend,
Foot, hand, and knee their aid must lend.
Wilfrid, all dizzy with dismay,
Views from beneath his dreadful way;
Now to the oak's warped roots he clings,
Now trusts his weight to ivy strings;
Now, like the wild goat, must he dare
An unsupported leap in air;
Hid in the shrubby rain-course now,
You mark him by the crashing bough,
And by his corslet's sullen clank,
And by the stones spurned from the bank,
And by the hawk scared from her nest,
And ravens croaking o'er their guest,
Who deem his forfeit limbs shall pay
The tribute of his bold essay.

XV.

See, he emerges!—desperate now
All farther course—yon beetling brow,
In craggy nakedness sublime,
What heart or foot shall dare to climb?
It bears no tendril for his clasp,
Presents no angle to his grasp;
Sole stay his foot may rest upon,
Is yon earth-bedded jetting stone.
Balanced on such precarious prop,
He strains his grasp to reach the top.
Just as the dangerous stretch he makes,
By heaven, his faithless footstool shakes!
Beneath his tottering bulk it bends,
It sways, it loosens, it descends!
And downward holds its headlong way,
Crashing o'er rock and copse-wood spray.
Loud thunders shake the echoing dell!—
Fell it alone?—alone it fell.

Just on the very verge of fate,
The hardy Bertram's falling weight
He trusted to his sinewy hands,
And on the top unharmed he stands!

XVI.

Wilfrid a safer path pursued,
At intervals where, roughly hewed,
Rude steps ascending from the dell
Rendered the cliffs accessible.
By circuit slow he thus attained
The height that Risingham had gained,
And when he issued from the wood,
Before the gate of Mortham stood.[11]
'Twas a fair scene! the sunbeam lay
On battled tower and portal gray,
And from the grassy slope he sees
The Greta flow to meet the Tees,
Where, issuing from her darksome bed,
She caught the morning's eastern red,
And through the softening vale below
Rolled her bright waves in rosy glow,
All blushing to her bridal bed,
Like some shy maid in convent bred,
While linnet, lark, and blackbird gay,
Sing forth her nuptial roundelay.

XVII.

'Twas sweetly sung that roundelay,
That summer morn shone blith and gay,
But morning beam, and wild bird's call
Awaked not Mortham's silent hall.
No porter, by the low-browed gate,
Took in the wonted niche his seat;
To the paved court, no peasant drew,
Waked to their toil no menial crew;
The maiden's carol was not heard,
As to her morning task she fared;
In the void offices around,
Rung not a hoof, nor bayed a hound,
Nor eager steed, with shrilling neigh,
Accused the lagging groom's delay;
Untrimmed, undressed, neglected now,
Was alleyed walk and orchard bough;
All spoke the master's absent care,
All spoke neglect and disrepair.
South of the gate an arrow flight,
Two mighty elms their limbs unite,
As if a canopy to spread
O'er the lone dwelling of the dead;
For their huge boughs in arches bent
Above a massive monument,
Carved o'er in ancient Gothic wise,
With many a scutcheon and device:
There, spent with toil and sunk in gloom,
Bertram stood pondering by the tomb.

XVIII.

"It vanished, like a flitting ghost!
Behind this tomb," he said, "'twas lost—
This tomb, where oft I deemed, lies stored
Of Mortham's Indian wealth, the hoard.
'Tis true, the aged servants said
Here his lamented wife is laid;
But weightier reasons may be guessed
For their lord's strict and stern behest,
That none should on his steps intrude,
Whene'er he sought this solitude.—
An ancient mariner I knew,
What time I sailed with Morgan's crew.
Who oft, 'mid our carousals, spake
Of Raleigh, Forbisher, and Drake;
Adventurous hearts! who bartered bold
Their English steel for Spanish gold.

Trust not, would his experience say,
Captain or comrade with your prey:
But seek some charnel, when, at full,
The moon gilds skeleton and skull;
There dig, and tomb your precious heap,
And bid the dead your treasure keep;[12]
Sure stewards they, if fitting spell
Their service to the task compel.
Lacks there such charnel!—kill a slave,
Or prisoner, on the treasure grave;
And bid his discontented ghost
Stalk nightly on his lonely post.
Such was his tale. Its truth, I ween,
Is in my morning visior seen."

XIX.

Wilfrid, who scorned the legend wild,
In mingled mirth and pity smiled,
Much marvelling that a breast so bold
In such fond tale belief should hold;
But yet of Bertram sought to know
The apparition's form and show.
The power within the guilty breast,
Oft vanquished, never quite suppressed,
That unsubdued and lurking lies
To take the felon by surprise,[13]
And force him, as by magic spell,
In his despite his guilt to tell,
That power in Bertram's breast awoke;
Scarce conscious he was heard, he spoke:
"'Twas Mortham's form, from foot to head!
His morion, with the plume of red,
His shape, his mien, 'twas Mortham right,
As when I slew him in the fight."
"Thou slay him? thou?" With conscious start
He heard, then manned his haughty heart.
"I slew him! I! I had forgot,
Thou, stripling, knew'st not of the plot.
But it is spoken; nor will I
Deed done, or spoken word, deny.
I slew him, I! for thankless pride;
'Twas by this hand that Mortham died."

XX.

Wilfrid, of gentle hand and heart,
Averse to every active part,
But most averse to martial broil,
From danger shrunk, and turned from toil;
Yet the meek lover of the lyre
Nursed one brave spark of noble fire;
Against injustice, fraud, or wrong,
His blood beat high, his hand waxed strong.
Not his the nerves that could sustain,
Unshaken, danger, toil, and pain;
But when that spark blazed forth to flame,
He rose superior to his frame.
And now it came, that generous mood;
And, in full current of his blood,
On Bertram he laid desperate hand,
Placed firm his foot, and drew his brand.
"Should every fiend to whom thou'rt sold,
Rise in thine aid, I keep my hold.—
Arouse there, ho! take spear and sword!
Attack the murderer of your lord!"

XXI.

A moment, fixed as by a spell,
Stood Bertram—it seemed miracle,
That one so feeble, soft, and tame,
Set grasp on warlike Risingham.
But when he felt a feeble stroke,
The fiend within the ruffian woke!
To wrench the sword from Wilfrid's hand,
To dash him headlong on the sand,

Was but one moment's work,—one more
Had drenched the blade in Wilfrid's gore;
But, in the instant it arose,
To end his life, his love, his woes,
A warlike form, that marked the scene,
Presents his rapier sheathed between,
Parries the fast-descending blow,
And steps 'twixt Wilfrid and his foe;
Nor then unscabbarded his brand,
But sternly pointing with his hand,
With monarch's voice forbade the fight,
And motioned Bertram from his sight.
"Go, and repent," he said, "while time
Is given thee; add not crime to crime."

XXII.

Mute and uncertain, and amazed,
As on a vision, Bertram gazed!
'Twas Mortham's bearing bold and high,
His sinewy frame, his falcon eye,
His look and accent of command,
The martial gesture of his hand,
His stately form, spare-built and tall,
His war-bleached locks, 'twas Mortham all.
Through Bertram's dizzy brain career
A thousand thoughts, and all of fear.
His wavering faith received not quite
The form he saw as Mortham's sprite,
But more he feared it, if it stood
His lord, in living flesh and blood—
What spectre can the charnel send,
So dreadful as an injured friend?
Then, too, the habit of command,
Used by the leader of the band,
When Risingham, for many a day,
Had marched and fought beneath his sway,
Tamed him—and, with reverted face,
Backward he bore his sullen pace,
Oft stopped, and oft on Mortham stared,
And dark as rated mastiff glared;
But when the tramp of steeds was heard,
Plunged in the glen, and disappeared.
Nor longer there the warrior stood,
Retiring eastward through the wood;
But first to Wilfrid warning gives,
"Tell thou to none that Mortham lives."

XXIII.

Still rung these words in Wilfrid's ear,
Hinting he knew not what of fear,
When nearer came the coursers' tread,
And, with his father at their head,
Of horsemen armed, a gallant power
Reined up their steeds before the tower.
"Whence these pale looks, my son?" he said;
"Where's Bertram? why that naked blade?"
Wilfrid ambiguously replied,
(For Mortham's charge his honour tied,)
"Bertram is gone—the villain's word,
Avouched him murderer of his lord!
E'en now we fought—but, when your tread
Announced you nigh, the felon fled."
In Wycliffe's conscious eye appear
A guilty hope, a guilty fear;
On his pale brow the dew-drop broke,
And his lip quivered as he spoke.

XXIV.

"A murderer! Philip Mortham died
Amid the battle's wildest tide.
Wilfrid, or Bertram raves, or you!
Yet grant such strange confession true,
Pursuit were vain—let him fly far—
Justice must sleep in civil war."

A gallant youth rode near his side,
Brave Rokeby's page, in battle tried;
That morn, an embassy of weight
He brought to Barnard's castle gate,
And followed now in Wycliffe's train,
An answer for his lord to gain.
His steed, whose arched and sable neck
An hundred wreaths of foam bedeck,
Chafed not against the curb more high
Than he at Oswald's cold reply;
He bit his lip, implored his saint,
(His the old faith)—then burst restraint.

XXV.

"Yes!—I beheld his bloody fall,
By that base traitor's dastard ball,
Just when I thought to measure sword,
Presumptuous hope! with Mortham's lord.
And shall the murderer 'scape, who slew
His leader, generous, brave, and true?
Escape! while on the dew you trace
The marks of his gigantic pace?
No! ere the sun that dew shall dry,
False Risingham shall yield or die.
Ring out the castle larum bell!
Arouse the peasants with the knell!
Meantime, disperse—ride, gallants, ride!
Beset the wood on every side.
But if among you one there be,
That honours Mortham's memory,
Let him dismount and follow me!
Else on your crests sit fear and shame,
And foul suspicion dog your name!"

XXVI.

Instant to earth young Redmond sprung,
Instant on earth the harness rung
Of twenty men of Wycliffe's band,
Who waited not their lord's command.
Redmond his spurs from buskins drew,
His mantle from his shoulder threw,
His pistols in his belt he placed,
The greenwood gained, the footsteps traced,
Shouted like huntsman to his hounds,
"To cover, hark!"—and in he bounds.
Scarce heard was Oswald's anxious cry,
"Suspicion! yes—pursue him—fly—
But venture not, in useless strife,
On ruffian desperate of his life.
Whoever finds him, shoot him dead!
Five hundred nobles for his head."

XXVII.

The horsemen galloped, to make good
Each pass that issued from the wood,
Loud from the thickets rung the shout
Of Redmond and his eager route;
With them was Wilfrid, stung with ire,
And envying Redmond's martial fire,
And emulous of fame. But where
Is Oswald, noble Mortham's heir?
He, bound by honour, law, and faith,
Avenger of his kinsman's death?
Leaning against the elmine tree,
With drooping head and slackened knee,
And clenched teeth, and close clasped hands,
In agony of soul he stands!
His downcast eye on earth is bent,
His soul to every sound is lent,
For in each shout that cleaves the air
May ring discovery and despair

XXVIII.

What 'vailed it him, that brightly played
The morning sun on Mortham's glade?

All seems in giddy round to ride,
Like objects on a stormy tide,
Seen eddying by the moonlight dim,
Imperfectly to sink or swim.
What 'vailed it, that the fair domain,
Its battled mansion, hill, and plain,
On which the sun so brightly shone,
Envied so long, was now his own?
The lowest dungeon, in that hour,
Of Brackenbury's dismal tower,[14]
Had been his choice, could such a doom
Have opened Mortham's bloody tomb!
Forced, too, to turn unwilling ear
To each surmise of hope or fear,
Murmured among the rustics round,
Who gathered at the larum sound.
He dare not turn his head away,
E'en to look up to heaven to pray;
Or call on hell, in bitter mood,
For one sharp death-shot from the wood!

XXIX.

At length o'erpast that dreadful space,
Back straggling came the scattered chase;
Jaded and weary, horse and man,
Returned the troopers, one by one.
Wilfrid, the last, arrived to say,
All trace was lost of Bertram's way,
Though Redmond still, up Brignal wood,
The hopeless quest in vain pursued.
O fatal doom of human race!
What tyrant passions passions chase!
Remorse from Oswald's brow is gone,
Avarice and pride resume their throne;
The pang of instant terror by,
They dictate thus their slave's reply.

XXX.

" Ay—let him range like hasty hound!
And if the grim wolf's lair be found,
Small is my care how goes the game
With Redmond or with Risingham.
Nay, answer not, thou simple boy!
Thy fair Matilda, all so coy
To thee, is of another mood
To that bold youth of Erin's blood.
Thy ditties will she freely praise,
And pay thy pains with courtly phrase;
In a rough path will oft command—
Accept at least—thy friendly hand;
His she avoids, or, urged and prayed,
Unwilling takes his proffered aid,
While conscious passion plainly speaks
In downcast look and blushing cheeks.
Whene'er he sings will she glide nigh,
And all her soul is in her eye,
Yet doubts she still to tender free
The wonted words of courtesy.
These are strong signs! yet wherefore sigh,
And wipe, effeminate, thine eye?
Thine shalt she be, if thou attend
The counsels of thy sire and friend.

XXXI.

" Scarce wert thou gone, when peep of light
Brought genuine news of Marston's fight.
Brave Cromwell turned the doubtful tide,
And conquest blest the rightful side;
Three thousand cavaliers lie dead,
Rupert and that bold marquis fled;
Nobles and knights, so proud of late,
Must fine for freedom and estate.
Of these committed to my charge,
Is Rokeby, prisoner at large;
Redmond, his page, arrived to say
He reaches Barnard's towers to-day.
Right heavy shall his ransom be,
Unless that maid compound with thee![15]
Go to her now—be bold of cheer,
While her soul floats 'twixt hope and fear:
It is the very change of tide,
When best the female heart is tried—
Pride, prejudice, and modesty,
Are in the current swept to sea,
And the bold swain, who plies his oar,
May lightly row his bark to shore."

CANTO III.

I.

The hunting tribes of air and earth
Respect the brethren of their birth;
Nature, who loves the claim of kind,
Less cruel chase to each assigned.
The falcon poised on soaring wing,
Watches the wild-duck by the spring;
The slow-hound wakes the fox's lair,
The greyhound presses on the hare;
The eagle pounces on the lamb,
The wolf devours the fleecy dam;
E'en tiger fell, and sullen bear,
Their likeness and their lineage spare.
Man, only, mars kind nature's plan,
And turns the fierce pursuit on man;
Plying war's desultory trade,
Incursion, flight, and ambuscade,
Since Nimrod, Cush's mighty son,
At first the bloody game begun.

II.

The Indian, prowling for his prey,
Who hears the settlers track his way,[1]
And knows in distant forest far
Camp his red brethren of the war;
He, when each double and disguise
To baffle the pursuit he tries,
Low crouching now his head to hide,
Where swampy streams through rushes glide,
Now covering with the withered leaves
The foot-prints which the dew receives;
He, skilled in every sylvan guile,
Knows not, nor tries, such various wile,
As Risingham, when on the wind
Arose the loud pursuit behind.
In Redesdale his youth had heard
Each art her wily dalesmen dared,[2]
When Rooken-edge, and Redswair high,
To bugle rung and blood-hound's cry,
Announcing Jedwood-axe and spear,
And Lid'sdale riders in the rear;
And well his venturous life had proved
The lessons that his childhood loved.

III.

Oft had he shown, in climes afar,
Each attribute of roving war;
The sharpened ear, the piercing eye,
The quick resolve in danger nigh;
The speed, that, in the flight or chase,
Outstripped the Carib's rapid race;
The steady brain, the sinewy limb,
To leap, to climb, to dive, to swim;
The iron frame, inured to bear
Each dire inclemency of air,
Nor less confirmed to undergo
Fatigue's faint chill, and famine's throe.
These arts he proved, his life to save,
In peril oft by land and wave,

On Arawaca's desert shore,
Or where La Plata's billows roar,
When oft the sons of vengeful Spain
Tracked the marauder's steps in vain.
These arts, in Indian warfare tried,
Must save him now by Greta's side.

IV.

'Twas then, in hour of utmost need,
He proved his courage, art, and speed.
Now slow he stalked with stealthy pace,
Now started forth in rapid race,
Oft doubling back in mazy train,
To blind the trace the dews retain;
Now clombe the rocks projecting high,
To baffle the pursuer's eye,
Now sought the stream, whose brawling sound
The echo of his footsteps drowned.
But if the forest verge he nears,
There trample steeds and glimmer spears;
If deeper down the copse he drew,
He heard the rangers' loud halloo,
Beating each cover while they came,
As if to start the sylvan game.
'Twas then—like tiger close beset
At every pass with toil and net,
Countered, where'er he turns his glare,
By clashing arms and torches' flare,
Who meditates, with furious bound,
To burst on hunter, horse, and hound,—
'Twas then that Bertram's soul arose,
Prompting to rush upon his foes:
But as that crouching tiger, cowed
By brandished steel and shouting crowd,
Retreats beneath the jungle's shroud,
Bertram suspends his purpose stern,
And couches in the brake and fern,
Hiding his face, lest foemen spy
The sparkle of his swarthy eye.[3]

V.

Then Bertram might the bearing trace
Of the bold youth who led the chase,
Who paused to list for every sound,
Climbed every height to look around,
Then rushing on with naked sword,
Each dingle's bosky depths explored.
'Twas Redmond—by the azure eye;
'Twas Redmond—by the locks that fly
Disordered from his glowing cheek;
Mien, face, and form, young Redmond speak.
A form more active, light, and strong,
Ne'er shot the ranks of war along:
The modest, yet the manly mien,
Might grace the court of maiden queen;
A face more fair you well might find,
For Redmond's knew the sun and wind,
Nor boasted, from their tinge when free,
The charm of regularity;
But every feature had the power
To aid the expression of the hour:
Whether gay wit, and humour sly,
Danced laughing in his light-blue eye;
Or bended brow, and glance of fire,
And kindling cheek, spoke Erin's ire;
Or soft and saddened glances show
Her ready sympathy with wo;
Or in that wayward mood of mind,
When various feelings are combined,
When joy and sorrow mingle near,
And hope's bright wings are check'd by fear,
And rising doubts keep transport down,
And anger lends a short-lived frown;
In that strange mood which maids approve,
E'en when they dare not call it love,
With every change his features played,
As aspens show the light and shade.

VI.

Well Risingham young Redmond knew;
And much he marvelled that the crew,
Roused to revenge bold Mortham dead,
Were by that Mortham's foeman led;
For never felt his soul the wo,
That wails a generous foeman low,
Far less that sense of justice strong,
That wreaks a generous foeman's wrong.
But small his leisure now to pause;
Redmond is first whate'er the cause:
And twice that Redmond came so near,
Where Bertram couched like hunted deer,
The very boughs his steps displace,
Rustled against the ruffian's face,
Who, desperate, twice prepared to start,
And plunge his dagger in his heart!
But Redmond turned a different way,
And the bent boughs resumed their sway,
And Bertram held it wise, unseen,
Deeper to plunge in coppice green.
Thus, circled in his coil, the snake,
When roving hunters beat the brake,
Watches with red and glistening eye,
Prepared, if heedless step draw nigh,
With forked tongue and venomed fang
Instant to dart the deadly pang;
But if the intruders turn aside,
Away his coils unfolded glide,
And through the deep savannah wind,
Some undisturbed retreat to find.

VII.

But Bertram, as he backward drew,
And heard the loud pursuit renew,
And Redmond's hollo on the wind,
Oft muttered in his savage mind—
"Redmond O'Neale! were thou and I
Alone this day's event to try,
With not a second here to see,
But the gray cliff and oaken tree,—
That voice of thine, that shouts so loud,
Should ne'er repeat its summons proud!
No! nor e'er try its melting power
Again in maiden's summer bower."—
Eluded, now behind him die,
Faint and more faint, each hostile cry;
He stands in Seargill wood alone,
Nor hears he now a harsher tone
Than the hoarse cushat's plaintive cry,
Or Greta's sound that murmurs by;
And on the dale, so lone and wild,
The summer sun in quiet smiled.

VIII.

He listened long with anxious heart,
Ear bent to hear, and foot to start,
And, while his stretched attention glows,
Refused his weary frame repose.
'Twas silence all—he laid him down,
Where purple heath profusely strown
And throatwort with its azure bell,[4]
And moss and thyme his cushion swell.
There, spent with toil, he listless eyed
The course of Greta's playful tide;
Beneath her banks now eddying dun,
Now brightly gleaming to the sun,
As, dancing over rock and stone,
In yellow light her current shone,

Matching in hue the favourite gem
Of Albyn's mountain diadem.
Then, tired to watch the current's play,
He turned his weary eyes away,
To where the bank opposing showed
Its huge square cliffs through shaggy wood.
One, prominent above the rest,
Reared to the sun its pale gray breast;
Around its broken summit grew
The hazel rude, and sable yew;
A thousand various lichens died
Its waste and weather beaten side,
And round its rugged bases lay,
By time or thunder rent away,
Fragments, that, from its frontlet torn,
Were mantled now by verdant thorn.
Such was the scene's wild majesty,
That filled stern Bertram's gazing eye.

IX.

In sullen mood he lay reclined,
Revolving, in his stormy mind,
The felon deed, the fruitless guilt,
His patron's blood by treason spilt;
A crime, it seemed, so dire and dread,
That it had power to wake the dead.
Then pondering on his life betrayed
By Oswald's art to Redmond's blade,
In treacherous purpose to withhold,
So seemed it, Mortham's promised gold,
A deep and full revenge he vowed
On Redmond, forward, fierce, and proud;
Revenge on Wilfrid—on his sire
Redoubled vengeance, swift and dire!
If, in such mood (as legends say,
And well believed that simple day)
The enemy of man has power
To profit by the evil hour,
Here stood a wretch, prepared to change
His soul's redemption for revenge![5]
But though his vows, with such a fire
Of earnest and intense desire
For vengeance dark and fell, were made,
As well might reach hell's lowest shade,
No deeper clouds the grove embrowned,
No nether thunders shook the ground;
The demon knew his vassal's heart,
And spared temptation's needless art.

X.

Oft mingled with the direful theme,
Came Mortham's form—was it a dream?
Or had he seen, in vision true,
That very Mortham whom he slew?
Or had in living flesh appeared
The only man on earth he feared?—
To try the mystic cause intent,
His eyes, that on the cliff were bent,
Countered at once a dazzling glance,
Like sunbeam flashed from sword or lance.
At once he started as for fight,
But not a foeman was in sight;
He heard the cushat's murmur hoarse,
He heard the river's sounding course,
The solitary woodlands lay,
As slumbering in the summer ray.
He gazed, like lion roused, around,
Then sunk again upon the ground.
'Twas but, he thought, some fitful beam,
Glanced sudden from the sparkling stream;
Then plunged him in his gloomy train
Of ill-connected thoughts again,
Until a voice behind him cried,
"Bertram! well met on Greta-side."

XI.

Instant his sword was in his hand,
As instant sunk the ready brand;
Yet, dubious still, opposed he stood
To him that issued from the wood:—
"Guy Denzil! is it thou?" he said;
"Do we two meet in Scargill shade?—
Stand back a space!—thy purpose show,
Whether thou comest as friend or foe.
Report hath said that Denzil's name
From Rokeby's band was razed with shame."
"A shame I owe that hot O'Neale,
Who told his knight, in peevish zeal,
Of my marauding on the clowns
Of Calverley and Bradford downs.—[6]
I reck not. In a war to strive,
Where, save the leaders, none can thrive,
Suits ill my mood; and better game
Awaits us both, if thou'rt the same
Unscrupulous, bold Risingham,
Who watched with me in midnight dark,
To snatch a deer from Rokeby-park.
How think'st thou?"—"Speak thy purpose out;
I love not mystery or doubt."

XII.

"Then list.—Not far there lurk a crew,
Of trusty comrades, stanch and true,
Gleaned from both factions—roundheads, freed
From cant of sermon and of creed;
And cavaliers, whose souls, like mine,
Spurn at the bonds of discipline.
Wiser we judge, by dale and wold,
A warfare of our own to hold,
Than breathe our last on battle-down,
For cloak or surplice, mace or crown.
Our schemes are laid, our purpose set,
A chief and leader lack we yet.—
Thou art a wanderer, it is said,
For Mortham's death thy steps waylaid.
Thy head at price—so say our spies,
Who ranged the valley in disguise—
Join then with us; though wild debate
And wrangling rend our infant state,
Each, to an equal loth to bow,
Will yield to chief renowned as thou."

XIII.

"E'en now," thought Bertram, "passion-stirred,
I called on hell, and hell has heard!
What lack I, vengeance to command,
But of stanch comrades such a band!
This Denzil, vowed to every evil,
Might read a lesson to the devil.
Well, be it so! each knave and fool
Shall serve as my revenge's tool."—
Aloud, "I take thy proffer, Guy,
But tell me where thy comrades lie."
"Not far from hence," Guy Denzil said;
"Descend and cross the river's bed,
Where rises yonder cliff so gray."
"Do thou," said Bertram, "lead the way."
Then muttered, "It is best make sure;
Guy Denzil's faith was never pure."—
He followed down the steep descent,
Then through the Greta's streams they went,
And, when they reached the farther shore,
They stood the lonely cliff before.

XIV.

With wonder Bertram heard within
The flinty rock a murmured din;
But when Guy pulled the wilding spray
And brambles from its base away,

He saw, appearing to the air,
A little entrance low and square,
Like opening cell of hermit lone,
Dark winding through the living stone.
Here entered Denzil, Bertram here,
And loud and louder on their ear,
As from the bowels of the earth,
Resounded shouts of boisterous mirth.
Of old, the cavern straight and rude
In slaty rock the peasant hewed;
And Brignal's woods, and Scargill's, wave
E'en now o'er many a sister cave,[7]
Where, far within the darksome rift,
The wedge and lever ply their thrift.
But war had silenced rural trade,
And the deserted mine was made
The banquet hall, and fortress too,
Of Denzil and his desperate crew.
There Guilt his anxious revel kept;
There on his sordid pallet slept
Guilt-born Excess, the goblet drained
Still in his slumbering grasp retained;
Regret was there, his eye still cast
With vain repining on the past;
Among the feasters waited near,
Sorrow, and unrepentant Fear,
And Blasphemy, to frenzy driven,
With his own crimes reproaching heaven;
While Bertram showed, amid the crew,
The master-fiend that Milton drew.

XV.

Hark! the loud revel wakes again,
To greet the leader of the train.
Behold the group by the pale lamp,
That struggles with the earthy damp.
By what strange features Vice hath known
To single out and mark her own!
Yet some there are, whose brows retain
Less deeply stamped, her brand and stain.
See yon pale stripling! when a boy,
A mother's pride, a father's joy!
Now, 'gainst the vault's rude walls reclined,
An early image fills his mind:
The cottage, once his sire's, he sees,
Embowered upon the banks of Tees;
He views sweet Winston's woodland scene,
And shares the dance on Gainford-green.
A tear is springing—but the zest
Of some wild tale, or brutal jest,
Hath to loud laughter stirred the rest.
On him they call, the aptest mate
For jovial song and merry feat;
Fast flies his dream—with dauntless air,
As one victorious o'er despair,
He bids the ruddy cup go round,
Till sense and sorrow both are drowned,
And soon in merry wassail he,
The life of all their revelry,
Peals his loud song!—The muse has found
Her blossoms on the wildest ground,
'Mid noxious weeds at random strewed,
Themselves all profitless and rude.—
With desperate merriment he sung,
The cavern to the chorus rung:
Yet mingled with his reckless glee
Remorse's bitter agony.

XVI.

SONG.

O, Brignal banks are wild and fair,
And Greta woods are green,
And you may gather garlands there,
Would grace a summer queen.

And as I rode by Dalton-hall,
Beneath the turrets high,
A maiden on the castle wall
Was singing merrily,—

CHORUS.

" O, Brignal banks are fresh and fair,
And Greta woods are green;
I'd rather rove with Edmund there,
Than reign our English queen."—

" If, maiden, thou would'st wend with me,
To leave both tower and town,
Thou first must guess what life lead we,
That dwell by dale and down.
And if thou canst that riddle read,
As read full well you may,
Then to the green-wood shalt thou speed,
As blith as queen of May."

CHORUS.

Yet sung she, " Brignal banks are fair,
And Greta woods are green:
I'd rather rove with Edmund there,
Than reign our English queen.

XVII.

" I read you, by your bugle horn,
And by your palfrey good,
I read you for a ranger sworn,
To keep the king's green-wood."—
" A ranger, lady, winds his horn,
And 'tis at peep of light;
His blast is heard at merry morn,
And mine at dead of night."—

CHORUS.

Yet sung she, " Brignal banks are fair,
And Greta woods are gay,
I would I were with Edmund there,
To reign his queen of May!

" With burnished brand and musquetoon,
So gallantly you come,
I read you for a bold dragoon,
That lists the tuck of drum."
" I list no more the tuck of drum,
No more the trumpet hear;
But when the beetle sounds his hum,
My comrades take the spear.

CHORUS.

" And O! though Brignal banks be fair,
And Greta woods be gay,
Yet mickle must the maiden dare,
Would reign my queen of May!

XVIII.

" Maiden! a nameless life I lead,
A nameless death I'll die;
The fiend whose lantern lights the mead
Were better mate than I!
And when I'm with my comrades met,
Beneath the green-wood bough,
What once we were we all forget,
Nor think what we are now.

CHORUS.

" Yet Brignal banks are fresh and fair,
And Greta woods are green,
And you may gather garlands there,
Would grace a summer queen."

When Edmund ceased his simple song,
Was silence on the sullen throng,
Till waked some ruder mate their glee
With note of coarser minstrelsy.
But, far apart, in dark divan,
Denzil and Bertram many a plan,

Of import foul and fierce, designed,
While still on Bertram's grasping mind
The wealth of murdered Mortham hung;
Though half he feared his daring tongue,
When it should give his wishes birth,
Might raise a spectre from the earth!

XIX.

At length his wond'rous tale he told,
When scornful smiled his comrade bold;
For, trained in license of a court,
Religion's self was Denzil's sport;
Then judge in what contempt he held
The visionary tales of eld!
His awe for Bertram scarce repressed
The unbeliever's sneering jest.
"'Twere hard," he said, "for sage or seer
To spell the subject of your fear;
Nor do I boast the art renowned,
Vision and omen to expound.
Yet, faith, if I must needs afford
To spectre watching treasured hoard,
As ban-dog keeps his master's roof,
Bidding the plunderer stand aloof,
This doubt remains—thy goblin gaunt
Hath chosen ill his ghostly haunt;
For why his guard on Mortham hold,
When Rokeby castle hath the gold
Thy patron won on Indian soil,
By stealth, by piracy, and spoil?"

XX.

At this he paused—for angry shame
Lowered on the brow of Risingham.
He blushed to think that he should seem
Assertor of an airy dream,
And gave his wrath another theme.
"Denzil," he says, "though lowly laid,
Wrong not the memory of the dead;
For, while he lived, at Mortham's look
Thy very soul, Guy Denzil, shook!
And when he taxed thy breach of word
To yon fair rose of Allenford,
I saw thee crouch like chastened hound,
Whose back the huntsman's lash hath found.
Nor dare to call his foreign wealth
The spoil of piracy or stealth;
He won it bravely with his brand,
When Spain waged warfare with our land.[8]
Mark too—I brook no idle jeer,
Nor couple Bertram's name with fear;
Mine is but half the demon's lot,
For I believe, but tremble not.—
Enough of this.—Say, why this hoard
Thou deem'st at Rokeby castle stored!
Or think'st that Mortham would bestow
His treasure with his faction's foe?"

XXI.

Soon quenched was Denzil's ill-timed mirth:
Rather he would have seen the earth
Give to ten thousand spectres birth,
Than venture to awake to flame
The deadly wrath of Risingham.
Submiss he answered,—"Mortham's mind,
Thou know'st, to joy was ill inclined.
In youth, 'tis said, a gallant free,
A lusty reveller was he;
But since returned from over sea,
A sullen and a silent mood
Hath numbed the current of his blood.
Hence he refused each kindly call
To Rokeby's hospitable hall,
And our stout knight, at dawn of morn,
Who loved to hear the bugle-horn,
Nor less, when eve his oaks embrowned,
To see the ruddy cup go round,
Took umbrage that a friend so near
Refused to share his chase and cheer;
Thus did the kindred barons jar,
Ere they divided in the war.
Yet trust me, friend, Matilda fair
Of Mortham's wealth is destined heir."

XXII.

"Destined to her! to yon slight maid!
The prize my life had well nigh paid,
When 'gainst Laroche, by Cayo's wave,
I fought, my patron's wealth to save!—
Denzil, I knew him long, but ne'er
Knew him that joyous cavalier,
Whom youthful friends and early fame
Called soul of gallantry and game.
A moody man he sought our crew,
Desperate and dark, whom no one knew;
And rose, as men with us must rise,
By scorning life and all its ties.
On each adventure rash he roved,
As danger for itself he loved;
On his sad brow nor mirth nor wine
Could e'er one wrinkled knot untwine;
Ill was the omen if he smiled,
For 'twas in peril stern and wild;
But when he laughed, each luckless mate
Might hold our fortune desperate.
Foremost he fought in every broil,
Then scornful turned him from the spoil;
Nay, often strove to bar the way
Between his comrades and their prey;
Preaching, e'en then, to such as we,
Hot with our dear-bought victory,
Of mercy and humanity!

XXIII.

"I loved him well—his fearless part,
His gallant leading, won my heart.
And, after each victorious fight,
'Twas I that wrangled for his right,
Redeemed his portion of the prey
That greedier mates had torn away;
In field and storm thrice saved his life,
And once amid our comrades' strife.—[9]
Yes, I have loved thee! well hath proved
My toil, my danger, how I loved!
Yet will I mourn no more thy fate,
Ingrate in life, in death ingrate.
Rise, if thou canst!" he looked around,
And sternly stamped upon the ground—
"Rise, with thy bearing proud and high,
E'en as this morn it met mine eye,
And give me, if thou dar'st, the lie!"
He paused—then, calm and passion-freed,
Bade Denzil with his tale proceed.

XXIV.

"Bertram, to thee I need not tell
What thou hast cause to wot so well,
How superstition's nets were twined
Around the lord of Mortham's mind;
But since he drove thee from his tower,
A maid he found in Greta's bower,
Whose speech, like David's harp, had sway
To charm his evil fiend away.
I know not if her features moved,
Remembrance of the wife he loved;
But he would gaze upon her eye,
Till his mood softened to a sigh.

He, whom no living mortal sought
To question of his secret thought,
Now, every thought and care confessed
To his fair niece's faithful breast;
Nor was there aught of rich or rare,
In earth, in ocean, or in air,
But it must deck Matilda's hair.
Her love still bound him unto life;
But then awoke the civil strife,
And menials bore, by his commands,
Three coffers with their iron bands,
From Mortham's vault at midnight deep,
To her lone bower in Rokeby-keep,
Ponderous with gold and plate of pride,
His gift, if he in battle died."—

XXV.

"Then Denzil, as I guess, lays train,
These iron-handed chests to gain;
Else, wherefore should he hover here,
Where many a peril waits him near,
For all his feats of war and peace,
For plundered boors and harts of greece?*
Since through the hamlets as he fared,
What hearth has Guy's marauding spared,
Or where the chase that hath not rung
With Denzil's bow at midnight strung?"
—"I hold my wont—my rangers go
E'en now to track a milk-white doe.[10]
By Rokeby-hall she takes her lair,
In Greta wood she harbours fair,
And when my huntsman marks her way,
What think'st thou, Bertram, of the prey?
Were Rokeby's daughter in our power,
We rate her ransom at her dower!"

XXVI.

"'Tis well!—there's vengeance in the thought!
Matilda is by Wilfrid sought,
And hot-brained Redmond, too, 'tis said,
Pays lover's homage to the maid.
Bertram she scorned—if met by chance,
She turned from me her shuddering glance,
Like a nice dame, that will not brook
On what she hates and loathes to look;
She told to Mortham, she could ne'er
Behold me without secret fear,
Foreboding evil;—she may rue
To find her propheey fall true!
The war has weeded Rokeby's train,
Few followers in his halls remain;
If thy scheme miss, then, brief and bold,
We are enow to storm the hold,
Bear off the plunder and the dame,
And leave the castle all in flame."—

XXVII.

"Still art thou valour's venturous son!
Yet ponder first the risk to run;
The menials of the castle, true,
And stubborn to their charge, though few;
The wall to scale—the moat to cross—
The wicket-grate—the inner fosse"—
—"Fool! if we blench for toys like these,
On what fair guerdon can we seize?
Our hardiest venture, to explore
Some wretched peasant's fenceless door,
And the best prize we bear away,
The earnings of his sordid day."—
—"Awhile thy hasty taunt forbear:
In sight of road more sure and fair,
Thou would'st not choose, in blindfold wrath,
Or wantonness, a desperate path?
List then:—for vantage or assault,
From gilded vane to dungeon vault,
Each path of Rokeby-house I know:
There is one postern dark and low,
That issues at a secret spot,
By most neglected or forgot.
Now, could a spial of our train
On fair pretext admittance gain,
That sally-port might be unbarred;
Then, vain were battlement and ward!"

XXVIII.

"Now speak'st thou well;—to me the same,
If force or art shall urge the game;
Indifferent if like fox I wind,
Or spring like tiger on the hind.—
But hark! our merry-men so gay
Troll forth another roundelay."

SONG.

"A weary lot is thine, fair maid,
A weary lot is thine!
To pull the thorn thy brow to braid,
And press the rue for wine!
A lightsome eye, a soldier's mien,
A feather of the blue,
A doublet of the Lincoln green,—
No more of me you knew,
My love!
No more of me you knew.

"This morn is merry June, I trow,
The rose is budding fain,
But she shall bloom in winter snow,
Ere we two meet again."
He turned his charger as he spake,[11]
Upon the river shore,
He gave his bridle reins a shake,
Said, "Adieu for evermore,
My love!
And adieu for evermore."—

XXIX.

"What youth is this your band among,
The best for minstrelsy and song?
In his wild notes seem aptly met
A strain of pleasure and regret."—
"Edmund of Winston is his name;
The hamlet sounded with the fame
Of early hopes his childhood gave,—
Now centered all in Brignal cave!
I watch him well—his wayward course
Shows oft a tincture of remorse:
Some early love-shaft grazed his heart,
And oft the scar will ache and smart.
Yet is he useful;—of the rest
By fits the darling and the jest,
His harp, his story, and his lay,
Oft aid the idle hours away;
When unemployed, each fiery mate
Is ripe for mutinous debate.
He tuned his strings e'en now—again
He wakes them, with a blither strain."

XXX.

SONG.—ALLEN-A-DALE.

Allen-a-Dale has no faggot for burning,
Allen-a-Dale has no furrow for turning,
Allen-a-Dale has no fleece for the spinning,
Yet Allen-a-Dale has red gold for the winning.
Come, read me my riddle! come, hearken my tale!
And tell me the craft of bold Allen-a-Dale.

The baron of Ravensworth[12] prances in pride,
And he views his domains upon Arkindale side,
The mere for his net, and the land for his game,
The chase for the wild, and the park for the tame;

* Deer in season.

Yet the fish of the lake, and the deer of the vale,
Are less free to lord Dacre than Allan-a-Dale!

Allen-a-Dale was ne'er belted a knight,
Though his spur be as sharp, and his blade be as bright;
Allen-a-Dale is no baron or lord,
Yet twenty tall yeomen will draw at his word;
And the best of our nobles his bonnet will vail,
Who at Rere-cross on Stanmore[13] meets Allen-a-Dale.

Allen-a-Dale to his wooing is come;
The mother, she asked of his household and home;
"Tho' the castle of Richmond stands fair on the hill;
My hall," quoth bold Allen, "shows gallanter still;
'Tis the blue vault of heaven, with its crescent so pale,
And with all its bright spangles!" said Allen-a-Dale.

The father was steel, and the mother was stone;
They lifted the latch, and they bade him begone!
But loud on the morrow, their wail and their cry!
He had laughed on the lass with his bonny black eye,
And she fled to the forest to hear a love-tale,
And the youth it was told by was Allen-a-Dale.

XXXI.

"Thou seest that, whether sad or gay,
Love mingles ever in his lay.
But when his boyish wayward fit
Is o'er, he hath address and wit;
O! 'tis a brain of fire, can ape
Each dialect, each various shape."
"Nay, then, to aid thy project, Guy—
Soft! who comes here?"—"My trusty spy,
Speak, Hamlin! hast thou lodged our deer?"[14]
"I have—but two fair stags are near;
I watched her as she slowly strayed
From Eglistone up Thorsgill glade:
But Wilfrid Wycliffe sought her side,
And then young Redmond in his pride
Shot down to meet them on their way;
Much, as it seemed, was theirs to say:
There's time to pitch both toil and net,
Before their path be homeward set."
A hurried and a whispered speech
Did Bertram's will to Denzil teach,
Who, turning to the robber band,
Bade four the bravest take the brand.

CANTO IV.

I.

When Denmark's raven soared on high,
Triumphant through Northumbrian sky,
Till, hovering near, her fatal croak
Bade Reged's Britons dread the yoke,[1]
And the broad shadow of her wing
Blackened each cataract and spring,
Where Tees in tumult leaves his source,
Thundering o'er Caldron and High-Force;[2]
Beneath the shade the Northmen came,
Fixed on each vale a Runic name,[3]
Reared high their altars' rugged stone,
And gave their gods the land they won.
Then, Balder, one bleak garth was thine,
And one sweet brooklet's silver line,
And Woden's croft did title gain
From the stern father of the slain!
But to the monarch of the mace,
That held in fight the foremost place,
To Odin's son, and Sifia's spouse,
Near Startforth high they paid their vows,
Remembered Thor's victorious fame,
And gave the dell the thunderer's name.

II.

Yet scald or kemper erred, I ween,
Who gave that soft and quiet scene,
With all its varied light and shade,
And every little sunny glade,
And the blith brook that strolls along
Its pebbled bed with summer song,
To the grim god of blood and scar,
The grisly king of northern war.
O better were its banks assigned
To spirits of a gentler kind!
For, where the thicket-groups recede,
And the rathe primrose decks the mead,
The velvet grass seems carpet meet
For the light fairies' lively feet.
Yon tufted knoll, with daisies strown,
Might make proud Oberon a throne,
While, hidden in the thicket nigh,
Puck should brood o'er his frolic sly;
And where profuse the wood-veitch clings
Round ash and elm in verdant rings,
Its pale and azure pencilled flower
Should canopy Titania's bower.

III.

Here rise no cliffs the vale to shade,
But skirting every sunny glade,
In fair variety of green
The woodland lends its sylvan screen.
Hoary, yet haughty, frowns the oak,
Its boughs by weight of ages broke;
And towers erect, in sable spire,
The pine-tree scathed by lightning fire;
The drooping ash and birch, between,
Hang their fair tresses o'er the green,
And all beneath at random grow,
Each coppice dwarf of varied show,
Or round the stems profusely twined,
Fling summer odours on the wind.
Such varied group Urbino's hand
Round him of Tarsus nobly planned,
What time he bade proud Athens own
On Mars's mount the God unknown!
Then gray Philosophy stood nigh,
Though bent by age, in spirit high;
There rose the scar seamed veteran's spear,
There Grecian Beauty bent to hear,
While childhood at her foot was placed,
Or clung delighted to her waist.

IV.

"And rest we here," Matilda said,
And sate her in the varying shade.
"Chance-met, we well may steal an hour,
To friendship due from fortune's power.
Thou, Wilfrid, ever kind, must lend
Thy counsel to thy sister friend;
And Redmond, thou, at my behest,
No farther urge thy desperate quest,
For to my care a charge is left,
Dangerous to one of aid bereft,
Well nigh an orphan, and alone,
Captive her sire, her house o'erthrown."
Wilfrid, with wonted kindness graced,
Beside her on the turf she placed;
Then paused, with downcast look and eye,
Nor bade young Redmond seat him nigh.
Her conscious diffidence he saw,
Drew backward as in modest awe,

And sate a little space removed,
Unmarked to gaze on her he loved.

V.

Wreathed in its dark-brown rings, her hair
Half hid Matilda's forehead fair,
Half hid and half revealed to view
Her full dark eye of hazel hue.
The rose, with faint and feeble streak,
So slightly tinged the maiden's cheek,
That you had said her hue was pale;
But if she faced the summer gale,
Or spoke, or sung, or quicker moved,
Or heard the praise of those she loved,
Or when of interest was expressed
Aught that waked feeling in her breast,
The mantling blood in ready play
Rivalled the blush of rising day.
There was a soft and pensive grace,
A cast of thought upon her face,
That suited well the forehead high,
The eye-lash dark and downcast eye;
The mild expression spoke a mind
In duty firm, composed, resigned;
'Tis that which Roman art has given,
To mark their maiden queen of heaven.
In hours of sport, that mood gave way
To Fancy's light and frolic play;
And when the dance, or tale, or song,
In harmless mirth sped time along,
Full oft her doating sire would call
His Maud the merriest of them all.
But days of war, and civil crime,
Allowed but ill such festal time,
And her soft pensiveness of brow
Had deepened into sadness now.
In Marston field her father ta'en,
Her friends dispersed, brave Mortham slain,
While every ill her soul foretold,
From Oswald's thirst of power and gold,
And boding thoughts that she must part
With a soft vision of her heart,—
All lowered around the lovely maid,
To darken her dejection's shade.

VI.

Who has not heard—while Erin yet
Strove 'gainst the Saxons' iron bit—
Who has not heard how brave O'Neale
In English blood imbrued his steel,[4]
Against St. George's cross blazed high
The banners of his tanistry,
To fiery Essex gave the foil,
And reigned a prince in Ulster's soil?
But chief arose his victor pride,
When that brave marshal fought and died [5]
And Avon-Duff to ocean bore
His billows, red with Saxon gore.
'Twas first in that disastrous fight,
Rokeby and Mortham proved their might.
There had they fallen amongst the rest,
But pity touched a chieftain's breast;
The tanist he to great O'Neale,[6]
He checked his followers' bloody zeal,
To quarter took the kinsmen bold,
And bore them to his mountain hold,
Gave them each sylvan joy to know,
Slieve-Donard's cliffs and woods could show;
Shared with them Erin's festal cheer,
Showed them the chase of wolf and deer,
And, when a fitting time was come,
Safe and unransomed sent them home,
Loaded with many a gift, to prove
A generous foe's respect and love.

VII.

Years sped away. On Rokeby's head
Some touch of early snow was shed;
Calm he enjoyed, by Greta's wave,
The peace which James the peaceful gave,
While Mortham, far beyond the main,
Waged his fierce wars on Indian Spain.
It chanced upon a wintry night,
That whitened Stanmore's stormy height,
The chase was o'er, the stag was killed,
In Rokeby-hall the cups were filled,
And, by the huge stone chimney, sate
The knight, in hospitable state.
Moonless the sky, the hour was late,
When a loud summons shook the gate,
And sore for entrance and for aid
A voice of foreign accent prayed;
The porter answered to the call,
And instant rushed into the hall
A man, whose aspect and attire
Startled the circle by the fire.

VIII.

His plaited hair in elf-locks spread[7]
Around his bare and matted head;
On leg and thigh, close stretched and trim,
His vesture showed the sinewy limb:
In saffron died, a linen vest
Was frequent folded round his breast;
A mantle long and loose he wore,
Shaggy with ice, and stained with gore.
He clasped a burthen to his heart,
And, resting on a knotted dart,
The snow from hair and beard he shook,
And round him gazed with wildered look;
Then up the hall, with staggering pace,
He hastened by the blaze to place,
Half lifeless from the bitter air,
His load, a boy of beauty rare.
To Rokeby, next, he louted low,
Then stood erect his tale to show,
With wild majestic port and tone,
Like envoy of some barbarous throne:[8]
"Sir Richard, lord of Rokeby, hear!
Turlough O'Neale salutes thee dear;
He graces thee, and to thy care
Young Redmond gives, his grandson fair.
He bids thee breed him as thy son,
For Turlough's days of joy are done;
And other lords have seized his land,
And faint and feeble is his hand,
And all the glory of Tyrone
Is like a morning vapour flown.
To bind the duty on thy soul,
He bids thee think of Erin's bowl:
If any wrong the young O'Neale,
He bids thee think on Erin's steel.
To Mortham first this charge was due,
But, in his absence, honours you.
Now is my master's message by,
And Ferraught will contented die."

IX.

His look grew fixed, his cheek grew pale,
He sunk when he had told his tale;
For, hid beneath his mantle wide,
A mortal wound was in his side.
Vain was all aid—in terror wild,
And sorrow, screamed the orphan child.
Poor Ferraught raised his wistful eyes,
And faintly strove to sooth his cries;
All reckless of his dying pain,
He blest, and blest him o'er again!

And kissed the little hands outspread,
And kissed and crossed the infant head,
And, in his native tongue and phrase,
Prayed to each saint to watch his days;
Then all his strength together drew,
The charge to Rokeby to renew.
When half was faltered from his breast,
And half by dying signs expressed,
" Bless thee, O'Neil!" he faintly said,
And thus the faithful spirit fled.

X.

'Twas long ere soothing might prevail
Upon the child to end the tale;
And then he said, that from his home
His grandsire had been forced to roam,
Which had not been if Redmond's hand
Had but had strength to draw the brand,
The brand of Lenaugh More the red,
That hung beside the gray wolf's head.
'Twas from his broken phrase descried,
His foster-father was his guide,[9]
Who, in his charge, from Ulster bore
Letters, and gifts a goodly store;
But ruffians met them in the wood,
Ferraught in battle boldly stood,
Till wounded and o'erpowered at length,
And stripped of all, his failing strength
Just bore him here—and then the child
Renewed again his moaning wild.

XI.

The tear, down childhood's cheek that flows,
Is like the dew-drop on the rose;
When next the summer breeze comes by,
And waves the bush, the flower is dry;
Won by their care, the orphan child
Soon on his new protectors smiled,
With dimpled cheek and eye so fair,
Through his thick curls of flaxen hair.
But blithest laughed that cheek and eye,
When Rokeby's little maid was nigh;
'Twas his, with elder brother's pride,
Matilda's tottering steps to guide;
His native lays in Irish tongue,
To sooth her infant ear, he sung,
And primrose twined with daisy fair,
To form a chaplet for her hair.
By lawn, by grove, by brooklet's strand,
The children still were hand in hand,
And good sir Richard smiling eyed
The early knot so kindly tied.

XII.

But summer months bring wilding shoot
From bud to bloom, from bloom to fruit;
And years draw on our human span,
From child to boy, from boy to man;
And soon in Rokeby's woods is seen
A gallant boy in hunter's green.
He loves to wake the felon boar,
In his dark haunt on Greta's shore,
And loves, against the deer so dun,
To draw the shaft, or lift the gun;
Yet more he loves, in autumn prime,
The hazel's spreading boughs to climb,
And down its clustered stores to hail,
Where young Matilda holds her veil.
And she, whose veil receives the shower,
Is altered too, and knows her power;
Assumes a monitress's pride,
Her Redmond's dangerous sports to chide,
Yet listens still to hear him tell
How the grim wild-boar fought and fell,
How at his fall the bugle rung,
Till rock and green-wood answer flung;
Then blesses her, that man can find
A pastime of such savage kind!

XIII.

But Redmond knew to weave his tale
So well with praise of wood and dale,
And knew so well each point to trace,
Gives living interest to the chase,
And knew so well o'er all to throw
His spirit's wild romantic glow,
That, while she blamed, and while she feared,
She loved each venturous tale she heard.
Oft, too, when drifted snow and rain
To bower and hall their steps restrain,
Together they explored the page
Of glowing bard or gifted sage;
Oft, placed the evening fire beside,
The minstrel art alternate tried,
While gladsome harp and lively lay
Bade winter-night flit fast away:
Thus from their childhood blending still
Their sport, their study, and their skill,
A union of the soul they prove,
But must not think that it was love.
But, though they dared not, envious Fame
Soon dared to give that union name;
And when so often, side by side,
From year to year the pair she eyed,
She sometimes blamed the good old knight,
As dull of ear and dim of sight,
Sometimes his purpose would declare,
That young O'Neale should wed his heir.

XIV.

The suit of Wilfrid rent disguise
And bandage from the lovers' eyes;
'Twas plain that Oswald, for his son,
Had Rokeby's favour well nigh won.
Now must they meet with change of cheer,
With mutual looks of shame and fear;
Now must Matilda stray apart,
To school her disobedient heart;
And Redmond now alone must rue
The love he never can subdue.
But factions rose, and Rokeby sware,
No rebel's son should wed his heir;
And Redmond, nurtured while a child
In many a bard's traditions wild,
Now sought the lonely wood or stream,
To cherish there a happier dream,
Of maiden won by sword or lance,
As in the regions of romance;
And count the heroes of his line,
Great Nial of the pledges nine,[10]
Shane-Dymas wild,[11] and Geraldine,[12]
And Connan-More, who vowed his race
For ever to the fight and chase,
And cursed him, of his lineage born,
Should sheathe the sword to reap the corn,
Or leave the mountain and the wold,
To shroud himself in castle hold.
From such examples hope he drew,
And brightened as the trumpet blew.

XV.

If brides were won by heart and blade,
Redmond had both his cause to aid,
And all beside of nurture rare
That might beseem a baron's heir.
Turlough O'Neale, in Erin's strife,
On Rokeby's lord bestowed his life,
And well did Rokeby's generous knight
Young Redmond for the deed requite.

Nor was his liberal care and cost
Upon the gallant stripling lost:
Seek the North Riding broad and wide,
Like Redmond none could steed bestride;
From Tynemouth search to Cumberland,
Like Redmond none could wield a brand;
And then, of humour kind and free,
And bearing him to each degree
With frank and fearless courtesy,
There never youth was formed to steal
Upon the heart like brave O'Neale.

XVI.

Sir Richard loved him as his son,
And when the days of peace were done,
And to the gales of war he gave
The banner of his sires to wave,
Redmond, distinguished by his care,
He chose that honoured flag to bear,[13]
And named his page, the next degree
In that old time to chivalry.[14]
In five pitched fields he well maintained
The honoured place his worth obtained,
And high was Redmond's youthful name
Blazed in the roll of martial fame.
Had fortune smiled on Marston fight,
The eve had seen him dubbed a knight;
Twice, 'mid the battle's doubtful strife,
Of Rokeby's lord he saved the life;
But when he saw him prisoner made,
He kissed, and then resigned his blade,
And yielded him an easy prey
To those who led the knight away,
Resolved Matilda's sire should prove,
In prison, as in fight, his love.

XVII.

When lovers meet in adverse hour,
'Tis like a sun-glimpse through a shower,
A watery ray an instant seen
The darkly closing clouds between.
As Redmond on the turf reclined,
The past and present filled his mind;
"It was not thus," Affection said,
"I dreamed of my return, dear maid!
Not thus, when, from thy trembling hand,
I took the banner and the brand,
When round me, as the bugles blew,
Their blades three hundred warriors drew,
And, while the standard I unrolled,
Clashed their bright arms with clamour bold.
Where is that banner now?—its pride
Lies whelmed in Ouze's sullen tide!
Where now these warriors?—in their gore,
They cumber Marston's dismal moor!
And what avails a useless brand,
Held by a captive's shackled hand,
That only would his life retain,
To aid thy sire to bear his chain!"
Thus Redmond to himself apart,
Nor lighter was his rival's heart;
For Wilfrid, while his generous soul
Disdained to profit by control,
By many a sign could mark too plain,
Save with such aid, his hopes were vain.
But now Matilda's accents stole
On the dark visions of their soul,
And bade their mournful musing fly,
Like mist before the zephyr's sigh.

XVIII.

"I need not to my friends recal
How Mortham shunned my father's hall;
A man of silence and of wo,
Yet ever anxious to bestow
On my poor self whate'er could prove
A kinsman's confidence and love.
My feeble aid could sometimes chase
The clouds of sorrow for a space,
But, oftener, fixed beyond my power,
I marked his deep despondence lower.
One dismal cause, by all unguessed,
His fearful confidence confessed;
And twice it was my hap to see
Examples of that agony,
Which for a season can o'erstrain
And wreck the structure of the brain.
He had the awful power to know
The approaching mental overthrow,
And while his mind had courage yet
To struggle with the dreadful fit,
The victim writhed against its throes,
Like wretch beneath a murderer's blows.
This malady I well could mark,
Sprung from some direful cause and dark;
But still he kept its source concealed,
Till arming for the civil field;
Then in my charge he bade me hold
A treasure huge of gems and gold,
With this disjointed dismal scroll
That tells the secret of his soul,
In such wild words as oft betray
A mind by anguish forced astray.

XIX.

MORTHAM'S HISTORY.

"Matilda! thou hast seen me start,
As if a dagger thrilled my heart,
When it has happ'd some casual phrase
Waked memory of my former days.
Believe, that few can backward cast
Their thoughts with pleasure on the past.
But I!—my youth was rash and vain,
And blood and rage my manhood stain,
And my gray hairs must now descend
To my cold grave without a friend!
E'en thou, Matilda, wilt disown
Thy kinsman, when his guilt is known.
And must I lift the bloody veil,
That hides my dark and fatal tale?
I must—I will—pale phantom, cease!
Leave me one little hour in peace!
Thus haunted, think'st thou I have skill
Thine own commission to fulfil?
Or, while thou point'st with gesture fierce,
Thy blighted cheek, thy bloody hearse,
How can I paint thee as thou wert,
So fair in face, so warm in heart!

XX.

"Yes, she was fair! Matilda, thou
Hast a soft sadness on thy brow;
But her's was like the sunny glow,
That laughs on earth and all below!
We wedded secret—there was need—
Differing in country and in creed;
And when to Mortham's tower she came,
We mentioned not her race and name,
Until thy sire, who fought afar,
Should turn him home from foreign war,
On whose kind influence we relied
To sooth her father's ire and pride.
Few months we lived retired, unknown
To all but one dear friend alone,
One darling friend—I spare his shame,
I will not write the villain's name!

My trespasses I might forget,
And sue in vengeance for the debt
Due by a brother worm to me,
Ungrateful to God's clemency,
That spared me penitential time,
Nor cut me off amid my crime.

XXI.

"A kindly smile to all she lent,
But on her husband's friend 'twas bent
So kind, that, from its harmless glee,
The wretch misconstrued villany.
Repulsed in his presumptuous love,
A vengeful snare the traitor wove.
Alone we sate—the flask had flowed,
My blood with heat unwonted glowed,
When through the alleyed walk we spied
With hurried step my Edith glide,
Cowering beneath the verdant screen,
As one unwilling to be seen.
Words cannot paint the fiendish smile
That curled the traitor's cheek the while!
Fiercely I questioned of the cause;
He made a cold and artful pause,
Then prayed it might not chafe my mood—
'There was a gallant in the wood!'
We had been shooting at the deer;
My cross-bow (evil chance) was near.
That ready weapon of my wrath
I caught, and, hastening up the path,
In the yew-grove my wife I found,
A stranger's arms her neck had bound!
I marked his heart—the bow I drew—
I loosed the shaft—'twas more than true!
I found my Edith's dying charms
Locked in her murdered brother's arms!
He came in secret to inquire
Her state, and reconcile her sire.

XXII.

"All fled my rage—the villain first,
Whose craft my jealousy had nursed;
He sought in far and foreign clime
To 'scape the vengeance of his crime.
The manner of the slaughter done
Was known to few, my guilt to none:
Some tale my faithful steward framed—
I know not what—of shaft misaimed;
And even from those the act who knew,
He hid the hand from which it flew.
Untouched by human laws I stood,
But God had heard the cry of blood!
There is a blank upon my mind,
A fearful vision ill-defined,
Of raving till my flesh was torn,
Of dungeon bolts and fetters worn—
And when I waked to wo more mild,
And questioned of my infant child—
(Have I not written, that she bare
A boy, like summer morning fair?)—
With looks confused my menials tell,
That armed men in Mortham dell
Beset the nurse's evening way,
And bore her, with her charge, away.
My faithless friend, and none but he,
Could profit by this villany;
Him, then, I sought, with purpose dread
Of treble vengeance on his head!
He 'scaped me—but my bosom's wound
Some faint relief from wandering found,
And over distant land and sea
I bore my load of misery.

XXIII.

"'Twas then that fate my footsteps led
Among a daring crew and dread,
With whom full oft my hated life
I ventured in such desperate strife,
That e'en my fierce associates saw
My frantic deeds with doubt and awe.
Much then I learned, and much can show,
Of human guilt and human wo,
Yet ne'er have, in my wanderings, known
A wretch, whose sorrows matched my own!
It chanced, that after battle fray,
Upon the bloody field we lay;
The yellow moon her lustre shed
Upon the wounded and the dead,
While, sense in toil and wassail drowned,
My ruffian comrades slept around.
There came a voice—its silver tone
Was soft, Matilda, as thine own—
'Ah wretch!' it said, 'what makest thou here,
While unavenged my bloody bier,
While unprotected lives mine heir,
Without a father's name and care!'

XXIV.

"I heared—obeyed—and homeward drew;
The fiercest of our desperate crew
I brought, at time of need, to aid
My purposed vengeance, long delayed.
But, humble be my thanks to heaven,
That better hopes and thoughts has given,
And by our Lord's dear prayer has taught,
Mercy by mercy must be bought!
Let me in misery rejoice—
I've seen his face—I've heard his voice—
I claimed of him my only child—
As he disowned the theft, he smiled!
That very calm and callous look,
That fiendish sneer his visage took,
As when he said, in scornful mood,
'There is a gallant in the wood!'
—I did not slay him as he stood—
All praise be to my Maker given!
Long-sufferance is one path to heaven."

XXV.

Thus far the woful tale was heard,
When something in the thicket stirred.
Up Redmond sprang; the villain Guy
(For he it was that lurked so nigh)
Drew back—he durst not cross his steel
A moment's space with brave O'Neale,
For all the treasured gold that rests
In Mortham's iron-banded chests.
Redmond resumed his seat;—he said,
Some roe was rustling in the shade.
Bertram laughed grimly, when he saw
His timorous comrade backward draw:
"A trusty mate art thou, to fear
A single arm, and aid so near!
Yet have I seen thee mark a deer—
Give me thy carabine—I'll show
An art that thou wilt gladly know,
How thou mayest safely quell a foe."

XXVI.

On hands and knees fierce Bertram drew
The spreading birch and hazels through,
Till he had Redmond full in view.
The gun he levelled—mark like this
Was Bertram never known to miss,
When fair opposed to him there sate
An object of his mortal hate.
That day young Redmond's death had seen,
But twice Matilda came between

The carabine and Redmond's breast,
Just ere the spring his finger pressed.
A deadly oath the ruffian swore,
But yet his fell design forebore:
" It ne'er," he muttered, " shall be said,
That thus I scathed thee, haughty maid!"
Then moved to seek more open aim,
When to his side Guy Denzil came:
" Bertram, forbear! we are undone
Forever, if thou fire the gun.
By all the fiends, an armed force
Descends the dell, of foot and horse!
We perish if they hear a shot—
Madman! we have a safer plot—
Nay, friend, be ruled, and bear thee back!
Behold, down yonder hollow track,
The warlike leader of the band
Comes, with his broadsword in his hand."
Bertram looked up; he saw, he knew,
That Denzil's fears had counselled true,
Then cursed his fortune and withdrew,
Threaded the woodlands undescried,
And gained the cave on Greta-side.

XXVII.

They whom dark Bertram, in his wrath,
Doomed to captivity or death,
Their thoughts to one sad subject lent,
Saw not, nor heard, the ambushment.
Heedless and unconcerned they sate,
While on the very verge of fate;
Heedless and unconcerned remained,
When heaven the murderer's arm restrained;
As ships drift darkling down the tide,
Nor see the shelves o'er which they glide.
Uninterrupted thus they heard
What Mortham's closing tale declared.
He spoke of wealth as of a load
By fortune on a wretch bestowed,
In bitter mockery of hate,
His cureless woes to aggravate;
But yet he prayed Matilda's care
Might save that treasure for his heir—
His Edith's son—for still he raved
As confident his life was saved;
In frequent vision, he averred,
He saw his face, his voice he heard.
Then argued calm—had murder been,
The blood, the corpses, had been seen;
Some had pretended, too, to mark
On Windermere a stranger bark,
Whose crew, with jealous care, yet mild,
Guarded a female and a child.
While these faint proofs he told and pressed,
Hope seemed to kindle in his breast;
Though inconsistent, vague, and vain,
It warped his judgment and his brain.

XXVIII.

These solemn words his story close:—
" Heaven witness for me, that I chose
My part in this sad civil fight,
Moved by no cause but England's right.
My country's groans have bid me draw
My sword for gospel and for law;
These righted, I fling arms aside,
And seek my son through Europe wide.
My wealth on which a kinsman nigh
Already casts a grasping eye,
With thee may unsuspected lie.
When of my death Matilda hears,
Let her retain her trust three years;
If none, from me, the treasure claim,
Perished is Mortham's race and name;
Then let it leave her generous hand,
And flow in bounty o'er the land,
Soften the wounded prisoner's lot,
Rebuild the peasant's ruined cot;
So spoils, acquired by fight afar,
Shall mitigate domestic war."

XXIX.

The generous youth, who well had known
Of Mortham's mind the powerful tone,
To that high mind, by sorrow swerved,
Gave sympathy his woes deserved;
But Wilfrid chief, who saw revealed
Why Mortham wished his life concealed,
In secret, doubtless, to pursue
The schemes his wildered fancy drew.
Thoughtful he heard Matilda tell,
That she would share her father's cell,
His partner of captivity,
Where'er his prison-house should be;
Yet grieved to think that Rokeby-hall,
Dismantled and forsook by all,
Open to rapine and to stealth,
Had now no safeguard for the wealth
Intrusted by her kinsman kind,
And for such noble use designed.
" Was Barnard-castle then her choice,"
Wilfrid inquired with hasty voice,
" Since there the victor's laws ordain,
Her father must a space remain?"
A fluttered hope his accents shook,
A fluttered joy was in his look.
Matilda hastened to reply,
For anger flashed in Redmond's eye:—
" Duty," she said, with gentle grace,
" Kind Wilfrid, has no choice of place;
Else had I for my sire assigned
Prison less galling to his mind,
Than that his wild-wood haunts which sees,
And hears the murmur of the Tees,
Recalling thus, with every glance,
What captive's sorrow can enhance.
But where those woes are highest, there
Needs Rokeby most his daughter's care."

XXX.

He felt the kindly check she gave,
And stood abashed—then answered grave:—
" I sought thy purpose, noble maid,
Thy doubts to clear, thy schemes to aid.
I have beneath mine own command,
So wills my sire, a gallant band,
And well could send some horsemen wight
To bear the treasure forth by night,
And so bestow it as you deem
In these ill days may safest seem."—
" Thanks, gentle Wilfrid, thanks," she said:
" O be it not one day delayed!
And, more thy sister-friend to aid,
Be thou thyself content to hold,
In thine own keeping, Mortham's gold,
Safest with thee."—While thus she spoke,
Armed soldiers on their converse broke,
The same of whose approach afraid,
The ruffians left their ambuscade.
Their chief to Wilfrid bended low,
Then looked around as for a foe.
" What mean'st thou, friend?" young Wycliffe said,
" Why thus in arms beset the glade?"
—"That would I gladly learn from you;
For up my squadron as I drew,
To exercise our martial game
Upon the moor of Barninghame,

A stranger told you were waylaid,
Surrounded, and to death betrayed.
He had a leader's voice, I ween,
A falcon stance, a warrior's mien.
He bade me bring you instant aid;
I doubted not, and I obeyed."

XXXI.

Wilfrid changed colour, and, amazed,
Turned short and on the speaker gazed,
While Redmond every thicket round
Tracked earnest as a questing hound,
And Denzil's carabine he found;
Sure evidence, by which they knew
The warning was as kind as true.
Wisest it seemed, with cautious speed
To leave the dell. It was agreed,
That Redmond, with Matilda fair,
And fitting guard, should home repair;
At nightfall Wilfrid should attend,
With a strong band, his sister-friend,
To bear with her from Rokeby's bowers,
To Barnard-castle's lofty towers,
Secret and safe, the banded chests,
In which the wealth of Mortham rests.
This hasty purpose fixed, they part,
Each with a grieved and anxious heart.

CANTO V.

I.

The sultry summer day is done,
The western hills have hid the sun,
But mountain peak and village spire
Retain reflection of his fire.
Old Barnard's towers are purple still,
To those that gaze from Toller-hill:
Distant and high, the tower of Bowes
Like steel upon the anvil glows;
And Stanmore's ridge, behind that lay,
Rich with the spoils of parting day,
In crimson and in gold arrayed,
Streaks yet awhile the closing shade,
Then slow resigns to darkening heaven
The tints which brighter hours had given.
Thus aged men, full loth and slow,
The vanities of life forego,
And count their youthful follies o'er,
Till Memory lends her light no more.

II.

The eve, that slow on upland fades,
Has darker closed on Rokeby's[1] glades,
Where, sunk within their banks profound,
Her guardian streams to meeting wound.
The stately oaks, whose sombre frown
Of noontide made a twilight brown,
Impervious now to fainter light,
Of twilight make an early night.
Hoarse into middle air arose
The vespers of the roosting crows,
And with congenial murmurs seem
To wake the genii of the stream;
For louder clamoured Greta's tide,
And Tees in deeper voice replied,
And fitful waked the evening wind,
Fitful in sighs its breath resigned.
Wilfrid, whose fancy-nurtured soul
Felt in the scene a soft control,
With lighter footstep pressed the ground,
And often paused to look around;
And, though his path was to his love,
Could not but linger in the grove,
To drink the thrilling interest dear,
Of awful pleasure checked by fear.
Such inconsistent moods have we,
E'en when our passions strike the key.

III.

Now through the wood's dark mazes past,
The opening lawn he reached at last,
Where, silvered by the moonlight ray,
The ancient hall before him lay.
Those martial terrors long were fled,
That frowned of old around its head:
The battlements, the turrets gray,
Seemed half abandoned to decay:
On barbican and keep of stone
Stern time the foeman's work had done;
Where banners the invader braved,
The hare-bell now and wall-flower waved:
In the rude guard-room, where of yore
Their weary hours the warders wore,
Now, while the cheerful faggots blaze,
On the paved floor the spindle plays;
The flanking guns dismounted lie,
The moat is ruinous and dry,
The grim portcullis gone—and all
The fortress turned to peaceful hall.

IV.

But yet precautions, lately ta'en,
Showed danger's day revived again;
The court-yard wall showed marks of care,
The fallen defences to repair,
Lending such strength as might withstand
The insult of marauding band.
The beams once more were taught to bear
The trembling drawbridge into air,
And not, till questioned o'er and o'er,
For Wilfrid oped the jealous door;
And when he entered, bolt and bar
Resumed their place with sullen jar;
Then, as he crossed the vaulted porch,
The old gray porter raised his torch,
And viewed him o'er from foot to head,
Ere to the hall his steps he led.
That huge old hall, of knightly state,
Dismantled seemed and desolate.
The moon through transom-shafts of stone,
Which crossed the latticed oriels, shone,
And, by the mournful light she gave,
The Gothic vault seemed funeral grave.
Pennon and banner waved no more
O'er beams of stag and tusks of boar,
Nor glimmering arms were marshalled seen,
To glance those sylvan spoils between.
Those arms, those ensigns, borne away,
Accomplished Rokeby's brave array,
But all were lost on Marston's day!
Yet, here and there, the moonbeams fall
Where armour yet adorns the wall,
Cumbrous of size, uncouth to sight,
And useless in the modern fight;
Like veteran relic of the wars,
Known only by neglected scars.

V.

Matilda soon to greet him came,
And bade them light the evening flame;
Said, all for parting was prepared,
And tarried but for Wilfrid's guard.
But then, reluctant to unfold
His father's avarice of gold,
He hinted, that, lest jealous eye
Should on their precious burthen pry,

He judged it best the castle-gate
To enter when the night wore late;
And therefore he had left command
With those he trusted of his band,
That they should be at Rokeby met,
What time the midnight watch was set.
Now Redmond came, whose anxious care
Till then was busied to prepare
All needful, meetly to arrange
The mansion for its mournful change.
With Wilfrid's care and kindness pleased,
His cold unready hand he seized,
And pressed it till his kindly strain
The gentle youth returned again.
Seemed as between them this was said,
"Awhile let jealousy be dead;
And let our contest be, whose care
Shall best assist this helpless fair."

VI.

There was no speech the truce to bind,
It was a compact of the mind;
A generous thought at once imprest
On either rival's generous breast.
Matilda well the secret took,
From sudden change of mien and look,
And—for not small had been her fear
Of jealous ire and danger near—
Felt, e'en in her dejected state,
A joy beyond the reach of fate.
They closed beside the chimney's blaze,
And talked and hoped for happier days,
And lent their spirits' rising glow
Awhile to gild impending wo;—
High privilege of youthful time,
Worth all the pleasures of our prime!
The bickering faggot sparkled bright,
And gave the scene of love to sight,
Bade Wilfrid's cheek more lively glow,
Played on Matilda's neck of snow,
Her nut-brown curls and forehead high,
And laughed in Redmond's azure eye.
Two lovers by the maiden sate,
Without a glance of jealous hate;
The maid her lovers sate between,
With open brow and equal mien:—
It is a sight but rarely spied,
Thanks to man's wrath and woman's pride.

VII.

While thus in peaceful guise they sate,
A knock alarmed the outer gate,
And, ere the tardy porter stirred,
The tinkling of a harp was heard.
A manly voice, of mellow swell,
Bore burthen to the music well.

SONG.

"Summer eve is gone and past,
Summer dew is falling fast;
I have wandered all the day,
Do not bid me farther stray!
Gentle hearts, of gentle kin,
Take the wandering harper in!"—

But the stern porter answer gave,
With "Get thee hence, thou strolling knave!
The king wants soldiers; war, I trow,
Were meeter trade for such as thou."—
At this unkind reproof, again
Answered the ready minstrel's strain.

SONG RESUMED

"Bid not me, in battle field,
Buckler lift, or broadsword wield!
All my strength and all my art
Is to touch the gentle heart,
With the wizard notes that ring
From the peaceful minstrel string."

The porter, all unmoved, replied,
"Depart in peace, with heaven to guide:
If longer by the gate thou dwell,
Trust me, thou shalt not part so well."

VIII.

With somewhat of appealing look,
The harper's part young Wilfrid took;
"These notes so wild and ready thrill,
They show no vulgar minstrel's skill;
Hard were his task to seek a home
More distant, since the night is come;
And for his faith I dare engage—
Your Harpool's blood is soured by age;
His gate, once readily displayed,
To greet the friend, the poor to aid,
Now e'en to me, though known of old,
Did but reluctantly unfold."
"O blame not, as poor Harpool's crime,
An evil of this evil time.
He deems dependent on his care
The safety of his patron's heir,
Nor judges meet to ope the tower
To guest unknown at parting hour,
Urging his duty to excess
Of rough and stubborn faithfulness.
For this poor harper I would fain
He may relax; hark to his strain!"

IX.

SONG RESUMED.

"I have song of war for knight,
Lay of love for lady bright,
Fairy tale to lull the heir,
Goblin grim the maids to scare;
Dark the night, and long till day,
Do not bid me farther stray!

"Rokeby's lords of martial fame,
I can count them name by name;[2]
Legends of their line there be,
Known to few, but known to me;
If you honour Rokeby's kin,
Take the wandering harper in!

"Rokeby's lords had fair regard
For the harp, and for the bard:
Baron's race throve never well,
Where the curse of minstrel fell.
If you love that noble kin,
Take the weary harper in!"

"Hark! Harpool parleys—there is hope,"
Said Redmond, "that the gate will ope."
"For all thy brag and boast, I trow,
Nought know'st thou of the Felon Sow,"[3]
Quoth Harpool, "nor how Greta-side
She roamed, and Rokeby forest wide;
Nor how Ralph Rokeby gave the beast
To Richmond's friars to make a feast.
Of Gilbert Griffinson the tale
Goes, and of gallant Peter Dale,
That well could strike with sword amain,
And of the valiant son of Spain,
Friar Middleton, and blith sir Ralph;
They were a jest to make us laugh!
If thou canst tell it, in yon shed
Thou'st won thy supper and thy bed."

X.

Matilda smiled; "Cold hope," said she,
"From Harpool's love of minstrelsy!

But for this harper, may we dare,
Redmond, to mend his couch and fare?"
"O ask not me! at minstrel string
My heart from infancy would spring;
Nor can I hear its simplest strain,
But it brings Erin's dream again,
When placed by Owen Lysagh's knee,
(The filea of O'Neale was he,[4]
A blind and bearded man, whose eld
Was sacred as a prophet's held,)
I've seen a ring of rugged kerne
With aspect shaggy, wild, and stern,
Enchanted by the master's lay,
Linger around the live-long day,
Shift from wild rage to wilder glee,
To love, to grief, to ecstasy,
And feel each varied change of soul
Obedient to the bard's control.
Ah, Clandeboy! thy friendly floor
Slieve-Donard's oak shall light no more;[5]
Nor Owen's harp, beside the blaze,
Tell maiden's love, or hero's praise!
The mantling brambles hide thy hearth,
Centre of hospitable mirth;
All undistinguished in the glade,
My sires' glad home is prostrate laid,
Their vassals wander wide and far,
Serve foreign lords in distant war,
And now the stranger's sons enjoy
The lovely woods of Clandeboy!"
He spoke, and proudly turned aside,
The starting tear to dry and hide.

XI.

Matilda's dark and softened eye
Was glistening ere O'Neale's was dry.
Her hand upon his arm she laid,—
"It is the will of heaven," she said.
"And think'st thou, Redmond, I can part
From this loved home with lightsome heart,
Leaving to wild neglect whate'er
E'en from my infancy was dear?
For in this calm domestic bound
Were all Matilda's pleasures found.
That hearth, my sire was wont to grace,
Full soon may be a stranger's place;
This hall, in which a child I played,
Like thine, dear Redmond, lowly laid,
The bramble and the thorn may braid;
Or, passed for aye from me and mine,
It ne'er may shelter Rokeby's line.
Yet is this consolation given,
My Redmond, 'tis the will of heaven."
Her word, her action, and her phrase,
Were kindly as in early days;
For cold reserve had lost its power,
In sorrow's sympathetic hour.
Young Redmond dared not trust his voice;
But rather, had it been his choice,
To share that melancholy hour,
Than, armed with all a chieftain's power,
In full possession to enjoy
Slieve-Donard wide, and Clandeboy.

XII.

The blood left Wilfrid's ashen cheek;
Matilda sees, and hastes to speak.
"Happy in friendship's ready aid,
Let all my murmurs here be staid!
And Rokeby's maiden will not part
From Rokeby's hall with moody heart.
This night at least, for Rokeby's fame,
The hospitable hearth shall flame,
And, ere its native heir retire,
Find for the wanderer rest and fire,
While this poor harper, by the blaze,
Recounts the tale of other days.
Bid Harpool ope the door with speed,
Admit him, and relieve each need.
Meantime, kind Wycliffe, wilt thou try
Thy minstrel skill? nay, no reply—
And look not sad! I guess thy thought;
Thy verse with laurels would be bought,
And poor Matilda, landless now,
Has not a garland for thy brow.
True, I must leave sweet Rokeby's glades,
Nor wander more in Greta's shades;
But sure, no rigid jailor, thou
Wilt a short prison walk allow,
Where summer flowers grow wild at will,
On Marwood chase and Toller-hill;[6]
Then holly green and lily gay
Shall twine in guerdon of thy lay."
The mournful youth, a space aside,
To tune Matilda's harp applied;
And then a low sad descant rung,
As prelude to the lay he sung.

XIII.

THE CYPRESS WREATH.

O lady, twine no wreath for me,
Or twine it of the cypress tree!
Too lively glow the lilies light,
The varnished holly's all too bright,
The May-flower and the eglantine
May shade a brow less sad than mine:
But, lady, weave no wreath for me,
Or weave it of the cypress tree!

Let dimpled Mirth his temples twine
With tendrils of the laughing vine:
The manly oak, the pensive yew,
To patriot and to sage be due;
The myrtle bough bids lovers live,
But that Matilda will not give;
Then, lady, twine no wreath for me,
Or twine it of the cypress tree!

Let merry England proudly rear
Her blended roses, bought so dear;
Let Albyn bind her bonnet blue
With heath and hare-bell dipped in dew:
On favoured Erin's crest be seen
The flower she loves of emerald green—
But, lady, twine no wreath for me,
Or twine it of the cypress tree.

Strike the wild harp, while maids prepare
The ivy meet for minstrel's hair;
And, while his crown of laurel leaves
With bloody hand the victor weaves,
Let the loud trump his triumph tell;
But when you hear the passing bell,
Then, lady, twine a wreath for me,
And twine it of the cypress tree.

Yes! twine for me the cypress bough;
But, O Matilda, twine not now!
Stay till a few brief months are past,
And I have looked and loved my last!
When villagers my shroud bestrew
With pansies, rosemary, and rue,—
Then, lady, weave a wreath for me,
And weave it of the cypress tree.

XIV.

O'Neale observed the starting tear,
And spoke with kind and blithsome cheer—

"No, noble Wilfrid! ere the day
When mourns the land thy silent lay,
Shall many a wreath be freely wove
By hand of friendship and of love.
I would not wish that rigid Fate
Had doomed thee to a captive's state,
Whose hands are bound by honour's law,
Who wears a sword he must not draw;
But were it so, in minstrel pride
The land together would we ride,
On prancing steeds, like harpers old,
Bound for the halls of barons bold.
Each lover of the lyre we'd seek,
From Michael's mount to Skiddaw's peak,
Survey wild Albyn's mountain strand,
And roam green Erin's lovely land,
While thou the gentler souls should move,
With lay of pity and of love,
And I, thy mate, in rougher strain,
Would sing of war and warriors slain.
Old England's bards were vanquished then,
And Scotland's vaunted Hawthornden,[7]
And, silenced on lernian shore,
M'Curtin's harp[8] should charm no more!"
In lively mood he spoke, to wile
From Wilfrid's wo-worn cheek a smile.

XV.

"But," said Matilda, "ere thy name,
Good Redmond, gain its destined fame,
Say, wilt thou kindly deign to call
Thy brother minstrel to the hall?
Bid all the household, too, attend,
Each in his rank a humble friend;
I know their faithful hearts will grieve,
When their poor mistress takes her leave,
So let the horn and beaker flow
To mitigate their parting wo."
The harper came: in youth's first prime
Himself; in mode of olden time
His garb was fashioned, to express
The ancient English minstrel's dress,[9]
A seemly gown of Kendal green,
With gorget closed of silver sheen;
His harp in silken scarf was slung,
And by his side an anlace hung.
It seemed some masker's quaint array,
For revel or for holiday.

XVI.

He made obeisance, with a free
Yet studied air of courtesy.
Each look and accent, framed to please,
Seemed to affect a playful ease;
His face was of that doubtful kind,
That wins the eye, but not the mind;
Yet harsh it seemed to deem amiss
Of brow so young and smooth as this.
His was the subtle look and sly,
That, spying all, seems nought to spy;
Round all the group his glances stole,
Unmarked themselves, to mark the whole,
Yet sunk beneath Matilda's look,
Nor could the eye of Redmond brook.
To the suspicious, or the old,
Subtle and dangerous and bold
Had seemed this self-invited guest;
But young our lovers,—and the rest,
Wrapped in their sorrow and their fear
At parting of their mistress dear,
Tear-blinded to the castle hall
Came, as to bear her funeral pall.

XVII.

All that expression base was gone,
When waked the guest his minstrel tone;
It fled at inspiration's call,
As erst the demon fled from Saul.
More noble glance he cast around,
More free-drawn breath inspired the sound,
His pulse beat bolder and more high,
In all the pride of minstrelsy!
Alas! too soon that pride was o'er,
Sunk with the lay that bade it soar!
His soul resumed, with habit's chain,
Its vices wild and follies vain,
And gave the talent, with him born,
To be a common curse and scorn.
Such was the youth whom Rokeby's maid,
With condescending kindness, prayed
Here to renew the strain she loved,
At distance heard and well approved.

XVIII.

SONG.—THE HARP.

I was a wild and wayward boy,
My childhood scorned each childish toy;
Retired from all, reserved and coy,
To musing prone,
I wooed my solitary joy,
My harp alone.

My youth, with bold ambition's mood,
Despised the humble stream and wood
Where my poor father's cottage stood,
To fame unknown;
What should my soaring views make good?
My harp alone.

Love came with all his frantic fire,
And wild romance of vain desire;
The baron's daughter heard my lyre,
And praised the tone;
What could presumptuous hope inspire?
My harp alone.

At manhood's touch the bubble burst,
And manhood's pride the vision cursed,
And all that had my folly nursed
Love's sway to own;
Yet spared the spell that lulled me first,
My harp alone.

Wo came with war, and want with wo;
And it was mine to undergo
Each outrage of the rebel foe:
Can aught atone
My fields made waste, my cot laid low?
My harp alone!

Ambition's dreams I've seen depart,
Have rued of penury the smart,
Have felt of love the venomed dart
When hope was flown;
Yet rests one solace to my heart,
My harp alone!

Then, over mountain, moor, and hill,
My faithful harp, I'll bear thee still;
And when this life of want and ill
Is well nigh gone,
Thy strings mine elegy shall thrill,
My harp alone!

XIX.

"A pleasing lay!" Matilda said,
But Harpool shook his old gray head,
And took his baton and his torch,
To seek his guard-room in the porch.
Edmund observed—with sudden change,
Among the strings his fingers range,

Until they waked a bolder glee
Of military melody;
Then paused amid the martial sound,
And looked with well feigned fear around:
"None to this noble house belong,"
He said, "that would a minstrel wrong,
Whose fate has been, through good and ill,
To love his royal master still,
And, with your honoured leave, would fain
Rejoice you with a loyal strain."
Then, as assured by sign and look,
The warlike tone again he took;
And Harpool stopped, and turned to hear
A ditty of the cavalier.

XX.

SONG.—THE CAVALIER.

While the dawn on the mountain was misty and gray,
My true love has mounted his steed and away,
Over hill, over valley, o'er dale and o'er down;
Heaven shield the brave gallant that fights for the crown!

He has doffed the silk doublet the breast-plate to bear,
He has placed the steel-cap o'er his long flowing hair,
From his belt to his stirrup his broadsword hangs down.—
Heaven shield the brave gallant that fights for the crown!

For the rights of fair England that broadsword he draws,
Her king is his leader, her church is his cause;
His watch-word is honour, his pay is renown,—
God strike with the gallant that strikes for the crown!

They may boast of their Fairfax, their Waller, and all
The roundheaded rebels of Westminster-hall;
But tell these bold traitors of London's proud town,
That the spears of the north have encircled the crown.

There's Derby and Cavendish, dread of their foes;
There's Erin's high Ormond, and Scotland's Montrose!
Would you match the base Skippon, and Massy, and Brown,
With the barons of England that fight for the crown?

Now joy to the crest of the brave cavalier!
Be his banner unconquered, resistless his spear,
Till in peace and in triumph his toils he may drown,
In a pledge to fair England, her church, and her crown!

XXI.

"Alas!" Matilda said, "that strain,
Good harper, now is heard in vain!
The time has been, at such a sound,
When Rokeby's vassals gathered round,
An hundred manly hearts would bound;
But now, the stirring verse we hear,
Like trump in dying soldier's ear!
Listless and sad the notes we own,
The power to answer them is flown.
Yet not without his meet applause
Be he that sings the rightful cause,
E'en when the crisis of its fate
To human eye seems desperate.
While Rokeby's heir such power retains,
Let this slight guerdon pay thy pains:
And lend thy harp; I fain would try,
If my poor skill can aught supply,
Ere yet I leave my father's hall;
To mourn the cause in which we fall."

XXII.

The harper, with a downcast look,
And trembling hand, her bounty took.
As yet, the conscious pride of art
Had steeled him in his treacherous part;
A powerful spring, of force unguessed,
That hath each gentler mood suppressed,
And reigned in many a human breast,
From his that plans the red campaign,
To his that wastes the woodland reign.
The falling wing, the bloodshot eye,
The sportsman marks with apathy,
Each feeling of his victim's ill
Drowned in his own successful skill.
The veteran, too, who now no more
Aspires to head the battle's roar,
Loves still the triumph of his art,
And traces on the pencilled chart
Some stern invader's destined way,
Through blood and ruin, to his prey;
Patriots to death, and towns to flame,
He dooms, to raise another's name,
And shares the guilt, though not the fame.
What pays him for his span of time
Spent in premeditated crime?
What against pity arms his heart?
It is the conscious pride of art.

XXIII.

But principles in Edmund's mind
Were baseless, vague, and undefined.
His soul, like bark with rudder lost,
On passion's changeful tide was tost:
Nor vice nor virtue had the power
Beyond the impression of the hour;
And O! when passion rules, how rare
The hours that fall to virtue's share!
Yet now she roused her—for the pride,
The lack of sterner guilt supplied,
Could scarce support him when arose
The lay that mourned Matilda's woes.

SONG.—THE FAREWELL.

The sound of Rokeby's woods I hear,
They mingle with the song;
Dark Greta's voice is in mine ear,
I must not hear them long.
From every loved and native haunt
The native heir must stray,
And, like a ghost whom sunbeams daunt,
Must part before the day.

Soon from the halls my fathers reared,
Their scutcheons may descend,
A line so long beloved and feared
May soon obscurely end.
No longer here Matilda's tone
Shall bid these echoes swell,
Yet shall they hear her proudly own
The cause in which we fell.

The lady paused, and then again
Resumed the lay in loftier strain.

XXIV.

Let our halls and towers decay,
Be our name and line forgot,
Lands and manors pass away,
We but share our monarch's lot.

If no more our annals show
Battles won and banners taken,
Still in death, defeat, and wo,
Ours be loyalty unshaken!

Constant still in danger's hour,
Princes owned our fathers' aid;
Lands and honours, wealth and power,
Well their loyalty repaid.
Perish wealth, and power, and pride!
Mortal boons by mortals given;
But let constancy abide:
Constancy's the gift of heaven.

XXV.

While thus Matilda's lay was heard,
A thousand thoughts in Edmund stirred.
In peasant life he might have known
As fair a face, as sweet a tone;
But village notes could ne'er supply
That rich and varied melody,
And ne'er in cottage maid was seen
The easy dignity of mien,
Claiming respect, yet waving state,
That marks the daughters of the great.
Yet not, perchance, had these alone
His scheme of purposed guilt o'erthrown;
But while her energy of mind
Superior rose to griefs combined,
Lending its kindling to her eye,
Giving her form new majesty,
To Edmund's thought Matilda seemed
The very object he had dreamed,
When, long ere guilt his soul had known,
In Winston bowers he mused alone,
Taxing his fancy to combine
The face, the air, the voice divine,
Of some fair princess of romance,
Who claims the aid of hero's lance.

XXVI.

"Such was my vision!" Edmund thought;
"And have I, then, the ruin wrought
Of such a maid, that fancy ne'er
In fairest vision formed her peer?
Was it my hand, that could unclose
The postern to her ruthless foes!
Foes, lost to honour, law, and faith,
Their kindest mercy sudden death!
Have I done this? I, who have swore,
That if the globe such angel bore,
I would have traced its circle broad,
To kiss the ground on which she trod;
And now—O! would that earth would rive,
And close upon me while alive!
Is there no hope? is all then lost?
Bertrám's already on his post!
E'en now, beside the hall's arched door,
I saw his shadow cross the floor!
He was to wait my signal strain—
A little respite thus we gain:
By what I heard the menials say,
Young Wycliffe's troop are on their way—
Alarm precipitates the crime!
My harp must wear away the time."
And then, in accents faint and low,
He faltered forth a tale of wo.

XXVII.

BALLAD.

"And whither would you lead me, then?"
Quoth the friar of orders gray;
And the ruffians twain replied again,
"By a dying woman to pray."

"I see," he said, "a lovely sight,
A sight bodes little harm,
A lady as a lily bright,
With an infant on her arm."

"Then do thine office, friar gray,
And see thou shrive her free;
Else shall the sprite, that parts to-night,
Fling all its guilt on thee.

"Let mass be said, and trentals read,
When thou'rt to convent gone,
And bid the bell of St. Benedict
Toll out its deepest tone."

The shrift is done, the friar is gone,
Blindfolded as he came—
Next morning all in Littlecot-hall[10]
Were weeping for their dame.

Wild Darrell is an altered man,
The village crones can tell;
He looks pale as clay, and strives to pray,
If he hears the convent bell.

If prince or peer cross Darrell's way,
He'll heard him in his pride—
If he meet a friar of orders gray,
He droops and turns aside.

XXVIII.

"Harper! methinks thy magic lays,"
Matilda said, "can goblins raise!
Well nigh my fancy can discern,
Near the dark porch, a visage stern;
E'en now, in yonder shadowy nook
I see it! Redmond, Wilfrid, look!
A human form distinct and clear—
God, for thy mercy!—it draws near!"
She saw too true.—Stride after stride,
The centre of the chamber wide
Fierce Bertram gained; then made a stand,
And, proudly waving with his hand,
Thundered—"Be still, upon your lives!
He bleeds who speaks, he dies who strives."
Behind their chief, the robber crew
Forth from the darkened portal drew,
In silence—save that echo dread
Returned their heavy measured tread.
The lamp's uncertain lustre gave
Their arms to gleam, their plumes to wave;
File after file in order pass,
Like forms on Banquo's mystic glass.
Then, halting at their leader's sign,
At once they formed and curved their line,
Hemming within its crescent drear
Their victims, like a herd of deer.
Another sign, and to the aim
Levelled at once their muskets came,
As waiting but their chieftain's word,
To make their fatal volley heard.

XXIX.

Back in a heap the menials drew,
Yet, e'en in mortal terror, true,
Their pale and startled group oppose
Between Matilda and the foes.
"O haste thee, Wilfrid!" Redmond cried;
"Undo that wicket by thy side!
Bear hence Matilda—gain the wood—
The pass may be awhile made good—
Thy hand, ere this, must sure be nigh—
O speak not—dally not—but fly!"
While yet the crowd their motions hide,
Through the low wicket door they glide,
Through vaulted passages they wind,
In Gothic intricacy twined;

Wilfrid half led, and half he bore,
Matilda to the postern door,
And safe beneath the forest tree
The lady stands at liberty.
The moonbeams, the fresh gale's caress,
Renewed suspended consciousness:
"Where's Redmond?" eagerly she cries;
"Thou answer'st not—he dies! he dies!
And thou hast left him all bereft
Of mortal aid—with murderers left!
I know it well—he would not yield
His sword to man—his doom is sealed!
For my scorned life, which thou hast bought
At price of his, I thank thee not."

XXX.

The unjust reproach, the angry look,
The heart of Wilfrid could not brook.
"Lady," he said, "my band so near,
In safety thou mayest rest thee here.
For Redmond's death thou shalt not mourn,
If mine can buy his safe return."
He turned away—his heart throbbed high,
The tear was bursting from his eye.
The sense of her injustice pressed
Upon the maid's distracted breast:
"Stay, Wilfrid, stay! all aid is vain!"
He heard, but turned him not again;
He reaches now the postern door,
Now enters—and is seen no more.

XXXI.

With all the agony that e'er
Was gendered 'twixt suspense and fear,
She watched the line of windows tall
Whose Gothic lattice lights the hall,
Distinguished by the paly red
The lamps in dim reflection shed,
While all beside in wan moonlight
Each grated casement glimmered white.
No sight of harm, no sound of ill,
It is a deep and midnight still.
Who looked upon the scene had guessed
All in the castle were at rest:
When sudden on the windows shone
A lightning flash, just seen and gone!
A shot is heard—again the flame
Flashed thick and fast—a volley came!
Then echoed wildly, from within,
Of shout and scream the mingled din,
And weapon-clash, and maddening cry
Of those who kill, and those who die!
As filled the hall with sulphurous smoke,
More red, more dark, the death-flash broke,
And forms were on the lattice cast
That struck, or struggled, as they past.

XXXII.

What sounds upon the midnight wind
Approach so rapidly behind? .
It is, it is, the tramp of steeds!
Matilda hears the sound, she speeds,
Seizes upon the leader's rein—
"O haste to aid, ere aid be vain!
Fly to the postern—gain the hall!"
From saddle spring the troopers all;
Their gallant steeds, at liberty,
Run wild along the moonlight lea.
But ere they burst upon the scene,
Full stubborn had the conflict been.
When Bertram marked Matilda's flight,
It gave the signal for the fight;
And Rokeby's veterans, seamed with scars
Of Scotland's and of Erin's wars,
Their momentary panic o'er,
Stood to the arms which then they bore;
(For they were weaponed, and prepared
Their mistress on her way to guard.)
Then cheered them to the fight O'Neale,
Then pealed the shot, and clashed the steel;
The war-smoke soon with sable breath
Darkened the scene of blood and death,
While on the few defenders close,
The bandits with redoubled blows,
And, twice driven back, yet fierce and fell,
Renew the charge with frantic yell.

XXXIII.

Wilfrid has fallen—but o'er him stood
Young Redmond, soiled with smoke and blood,
Cheering his mates, with heart and hand
Still to make good their desperate stand.
"Up, comrades, up! in Rokeby halls
Ne'er be it said our courage falls.
What! faint ye for their savage cry,
Or do the smoke-wreaths daunt your eye!
These rafters have returned a shout
As loud at Rokeby's wassail rout,
As thick a smoke these hearths have given
At Hallowtide or Christmas even.[11]
Stand to it yet! renew the fight,
For Rokeby's and Matilda's right!
These slaves! they dare not, hand to hand,
Bide buffet from a true man's brand."
Impetuous, active, fierce, and young,
Upon the advancing foes he sprung.
Wo to the wretch at whom is bent
His brandished falchion's sheer descent!
Backward they scattered as he came,
Like wolves before the levin flame,
When, 'mid their howling conclave driven,
Hath glanced the thunderbolt of heaven.
Bertram rushed on—but Harpool clasped
His knees, although in death he gasped;
His falling corpse before him flung,
And round the trammelled ruffian clung.
Just then the soldiers filled the dome,
And, shouting, charged the felons home
So fiercely, that, in panic dread,
They broke, they yielded, fell, or fled.
Bertram's stern voice they heed no more,
Though heard above the battle's roar,
While, trampling down the dying man,
He strove, with vollied threat and ban,
In scorn of odds, in fate's despite,
To rally up the desperate fight.

XXXIV.

Soon murkier clouds the hall enfold,
Than ere from battle-thunders rolled;
So dense, the combatants scarce know
To aim or to avoid the blow.
Smothering and blindfold grows the fight—
But soon shall dawn a dismal light!
'Mid cries, and clashing arms, there came
The hollow sound of rushing flame;
New horrors on the tumult dire
Arise—the castle is on fire!
Doubtful if chance had cast the brand,
Or frantic Bertram's desperate hand.
Matilda saw—for frequent broke
From the dim casements gusts of smoke.
Yon tower, which late so clear defined,
On the fair hemisphere reclined,
That, pencilled on its azure pure,
The eye could count each embrazure,
Now, swathed within the sweeping cloud,
Seems giant-spectre in his shroud;

Till from each loop-hole flashing light,
A spout of fire shines ruddy bright,
And, gathering to united glare,
Streams high into the midnight air,
A dismal beacon, far and wide
That wakened Greta's slumbering side.
Soon all beneath, through gallery long,
And pendant arch, the fire flashed strong,
Snatching whatever could maintain,
Raise, or extend, its furious reign,
Startling, with closer cause of dread,
The females who the conflict fled,
And now rushed forth upon the plain,
Filling the air with clamours vain.

XXXV.

But ceased not yet, the hall within,
The shriek, the shout, the earnage-din,
Till bursting lattices give proof
The flames had caught the raftered roof.
What! wait they till its beams amain
Crash on the slayers and the slain?
The alarm is caught—the drawbridge falls,
The warriors hurry from the walls,
But, by the conflagration's light,
Upon the lawn renew the fight.
Each straggling felon down was hewed,
Not one could gain the sheltering wood;
But forth the affrighted harper sprung,
And to Matilda's robe he clung.
Her shriek, entreaty, and command,
Stopped the pursuer's lifted hand.
Denzil and he alive were ta'en;
The rest, save Bertram, all are slain.

XXXVI.

And where is Bertram?—Soaring high,
The general flame ascends the sky;
In gathered group the soldiers gaze
Upon the broad and roaring blaze,
When, like infernal demon, sent
Red from his penal element,
To plague and to pollute the air,—
His face all gore, on fire his hair,
Forth from the central mass of smoke
The giant form of Bertram broke!
His brandished sword on high he rears,
Then plunged among opposing spears;
Round his left arm his mantle trussed,
Received and foiled three lances' thrust;
Nor these his headlong course withstood,
Like reeds he snapped the tough ash-wood.
In vain his foes around him clung;
With matchless force aside he flung
Their boldest,—as the bull, at bay,
Tosses the ban-dogs from his way.
Through forty foes his path he made,
And safely gained the forest glade.

XXXVII.

Scarce was this final conflict o'er,
When from the postern Redmond bore
Wilfrid, who, as of life bereft,
Had in the fatal hall been left,
Deserted there by all his train;
But Redmond saw, and turned again.
Beneath an oak he laid him down,
That in the blaze gleamed ruddy brown,
And then his mantle's clasp undid;
Matilda held his drooping head,
Till given to breathe the freer air,
Returning life repaid their care.
He gazed on them with heavy sigh,—
"I could have wished e'en thus to die!"
No more he said—for now with speed
Each trooper had regained his steed;
The ready palfreys stood arrayed,
For Redmond and for Rokeby's maid;
Two Wilfrid on his horse sustain,
One leads his charger by the reign.
But oft Matilda looked behind,
As up the vale of Tees they wind,
Where far the mansion of her sires
Beaconed the dale with midnight fires.
In gloomy arch above them spread,
The clouded heaven lowered bloody red;
Beneath, in sombre light, the flood
Appeared to roll in waves of blood.
Then, one by one, was heard to fall
The tower, the donjon-keep, the hall.
Each rushing down with thunder sound,
A space the conflagration drowned;
Till, gathering strength, again it rose,
Announced its triumph in its close,
Shook wide its light the landscape o'er,
Then sunk—and Rokeby was no more!

CANTO VI.

I.

The summer sun, whose early power
Was wont to gild Matilda's bower,
And rouse her with his matin ray
Her duteous orisons to pay,
That morning sun has three times seen
The flowers unfold on Rokeby green,
But sees no more the slumbers fly
From fair Matilda's hazel eye;
That morning sun has three times broke
On Rokeby's glades of elm and oak,
But, rising from their sylvan screen,
Marks no gray turret's glance between.
A shapeless mass lie keep and tower,
That, hissing to the morning shower,
Can but with smouldering vapour pay
The early smile of summer day.
The peasant, to his labour bound,
Pauses to view the blackened mound,
Striving, amid the ruined space,
Each well-remembered spot to trace.
That length of frail and fire-schorched wall
Once screened the hospitable hall;
When yonder broken arch was whole,
'Twas there was dealt the weekly dole;
And where yon tottering columns nod,
The chapel sent the hymn to God.
So flits the world's uncertain span!
Nor zeal for God, nor love for man,
Gives mortal monuments a date,
Beyond the power of time and fate.
The towers must share the builder's doom;
Ruin is theirs, and his a tomb:
But better boon benignant heaven
To faith and charity has given,
And bids the Christian hope sublime
Transcend the bounds of fate and time.

II.

Now the third night of summer came,
Since that which witnessed Rokeby's flame.
On Brignal cliffs and Scargill brake
The owlet's homilies awake,
The bittern screamed from rush and flag,
The raven slumbered on his crag,
Forth from his den the otter drew,
Grayling and trout their tyrant knew,
As between reed and sedge he peers,
With fierce round snout and sharpened ears,

Or, prowling by the moonbeam cool,
Watches the stream, or swims the pool;—
Perched on his wonted eyrie high,
Sleep sealed the tercelet's wearied eye,
That all the day had watched so well
The cushat dart across the dell.
In dubious beam reflected shone
That lofty cliff of pale gray stone,
Beside whose base the secret cave
To rapine late a refuge gave.
The crag's wild crest of copse and yew
On Greta's breast dark shadows threw;
Shadows that met or shunned the sight,
With every change of fitful light;
As hope and fear alternate chase
Our course through life's uncertain race.

III.

Gliding by crag and copsewood green,
A solitary form was seen
To trace with stealthy pace the wold,
Like fox that seeks the midnight fold,
And pauses oft, and cowers dismayed,
At every breath that stirs the shade.
He passes now the ivy bush,
The owl has seen him and is hush;
He passes now the doddered oak,
Ye heard the startled raven croak;
Lower and lower he descends,
Rustle the leaves, the brushwood bends;
The otter hears him tread the shore,
And dives, and is beheld no more;
And by the cliff of pale gray stone
The midnight wanderer stands alone.
Methinks, that by the moon we trace
A well-remembered form and face!
That stripling shape, that cheek so pale,
Combine to tell a rueful tale,
Of powers misused, of passion's force,
Of guilt, of grief, and of remorse!
'Tis Edmund's eye at every sound
That flings that guilty glance around;
'Tis Edmund's trembling haste divides
The brushwood that the cavern hides,
And, when its narrow porch lies bare,
'Tis Edmund's form that enters there.

IV.

His flint and steel have sparkled bright,
A lamp hath lent the cavern light.
Fearful and quick his eye surveys
Each angle of the gloomy maze.
Since last he left that stern abode,
It seemed as none its floor had trode;
Untouched appeared the various spoil;
The purchase of his comrades' toil;
Masks and disguises grimed with mud,
Arms broken and defiled with blood,
And all the nameless tools that aid
Night-felons in their lawless trade,
Upon the gloomy walls were hung,
Or lay in nooks obscurely flung.
Still on the sordid board appear
The relics of the noontide cheer;
Flagons and emptied flasks were there,
And bench o'erthrown, and shattered chair;
And all around the semblance showed,
As when the final revel glowed,
When the red sun was setting fast,
And parting pledge Guy Denzil past,
To Rokeby treasure-vaults! They quaffed,
And shouted loud and wildly laughed,
Poured maddening from the rocky door,
And parted—to return no more!
They found in Rokeby vaults their doom,—
A bloody death, a burning tomb.

V.

There his own peasant dress he spies,
Doffed to assume that quaint disguise,
And shuddering thought upon his glee,
When pranked in garb of minstrelsy.
"O be the fatal art accursed,"
He cried, "that moved my folly first,
Till bribed by bandit's base applause,
I burst through God's and Nature's laws!
Three summer days are scantly past
Since I have trode this cavern last,
A thoughtless wretch, and prompt to err—
But O, as yet no murderer!
E'en now I list my comrades' cheer,
That general laugh is in mine ear,
Which raised my pulse and steeled my heart,
As I rehearsed my treacherous part—
And would that all since then could seem
The phantom of a fever's dream!
But fatal memory notes too well
The horrors of the dying yell,
From my despairing mates that broke,
When flashed the fire and rolled the smoke,
When the avengers shouting came,
And hemmed us 'twixt the sword and flame!
My frantic flight—the lifted brand—
That angel's interposing hand!—
If for my life from slaughter freed,
I yet could pay some grateful meed!—
Perchance this object of my quest
May aid——" he turned, nor spoke the rest.

VI.

Due northward from the rugged hearth,
With paces five he metes the earth,
Then toiled with mattock to explore
The entrails of the cavern floor,
Nor paused till, deep beneath the ground,
His search a small steel casket found.
Just as he stooped to loose its hasp,
His shoulder felt a giant grasp:
He started, and looked up aghast,
Then shrieked—'twas Bertram held him fast.
"Fear not!" he said; but who could hear
That deep stern voice, and cease to fear?
"Fear not!—by heaven he shakes as much
As partridge in the falcon's clutch!"
He raised him, and unloosed his hold,
While from the opening casket rolled
A chain and reliquaire of gold.
Bertram beheld it with surprise,
Gazed on its fashion and device,
Then, cheering Edmund as he could,
Somewhat he smoothed his rugged mood;
For still the youth's half-lifted eye
Quivered with terror's agony,
And sidelong glanced, as to explore,
In meditated flight, the door.
"Sit," Bertram said, "from danger free;
Thou canst not, and thou shalt not, flee.
Chance brings me hither; hill and plain
I've sought for refuge-place in vain.
And tell me now, thou aguish boy,
What mak'st thou here? what means this toy?
Denzil and thou, I marked, were ta'en;
What lucky chance unbound your chain?
I deemed, long since on Baliol's tower,
Your heads were warped with sun and shower.
Tell me the whole—and mark! nought e'er
Chafes me like falsehood, or like fear."—

Gathering his courage to his aid,
But trembling still, the youth obeyed.

VII.

"Denzil and I two nights passed o'er,
In fetters on the dungeon floor.
A guest the third sad morrow brought;
Our hold dark Oswald Wycliffe sought,
And eyed my comrade long askance,
With fixed and penetrating glance.
'Guy Denzil art thou called?'—'The same.'—
'At court who served wild Buckinghame;
Thence banished, won a keeper's place,
So Villiers willed, in Marwood chase;
That lost—I need not tell thee why—
Thou madest thy wit thy wants supply,
Then fought for Rokeby:—have I guessed
My prisoner right?'—'At thy behest.'—
He paused awhile, and then went on
With low and confidential tone;
Me, as I judge, not then he saw,
Close nestled in my couch of straw.—
'List to me, Guy. Thou know'st the great
Have frequent need of what they hate;
Hence, in their favour oft we see
Unscrupled, useful men, like thee.
Were I disposed to bid thee live,
What pledge of faith hast thou to give?'

VIII.

"The ready fiend, who never yet
Hath failed to sharpen Denzil's wit,
Prompted his lie—'His only child
Should rest his pledge.'—The baron smiled,
And turned to me—'Thou art his son?'
I bowed—our fetters were undone,
And we were led to hear apart
A dreadful lesson of his art.
Wilfrid, he said, his heir and son,
Had fair Matilda's favour won;
And long since had their union been,
But for her father's bigot spleen,
Whose brute and blindfold party rage
Would, force per force, her hand engage
To a base kern of Irish earth,
Unknown his lineage and his birth,
Save that a dying ruffian bore
The infant brat to Rokeby door.
Gentle restraint, he said, would lead
Old Rokeby to enlarge his creed;
But fair occasion he must find
For such restraint well-meant and kind,
The knight being rendered to his charge
But as a prisoner at large.

IX.

"He schooled us in a well-forged tale,
Of scheme the castle walls to scale,
To which was leagued each eavalier,
That dwells upon the Tyne and Wear;
That Rokeby, his parole forgot,
Had dealt with us to aid the plot.
Such was the charge, which Denzil's zeal
Of hate to Rokeby and O'Neale
Proffered, as witness, to make good,
E'en though the forfeit were their blood.
I scrupled, until o'er and o'er
His prisoner's safety Wycliffe swore,
And then—alas! what needs there more?
I knew I should not live to say
The proffer I refused that day;
Ashamed to live, yet loth to die,
I soiled me with their infamy!"—

"Poor youth," said Bertram, "wavering still
Unfit alike for good or ill!
But what fell next?"—"Soon as at large
Was scrolled and signed our fatal charge,
There never yet, on tragic stage,
Was seen so well a painted rage
As Oswald showed! with loud alarm
He called his garrison to arm;
From tower to tower, from post to post,
He hurried as if all were lost;
Consigned to dungeon and to chain
The good old knight and all his train,
Warned each suspected cavalier,
Within his limits, to appear
To-morrow, at the hour of noon,
In the high church of Eglistone.'

X.

"Of Eglistone! E'en now I passed,"
Said Bertram, "as the night closed fast;
Torches and cressets gleamed around,
I heard the saw and hammer sound,
And I could mark they toiled to raise
A scaffold, hung with sable baize,
Which the grim headsman's scene displayed,
Block, axe, and saw-dust, ready laid.
Some evil deed will there be done,
Unless Matilda wed his son;—
She loves him not—'tis shrewdly guessed
That Redmond rules the damsel's breast.
This is a turn of Oswald's skill;
But I may meet, and foil him still!—
How camest thou to thy freedom?"—"There
Lies mystery more dark and rare.
In midst of Wycliffe's well-feigned rage,
A scroll was offered by a page,
Who told, a muffled horseman late
Had left it at the castle gate.
He broke the seal—his cheek showed change,
Sudden, portentous, wild, and strange;
The mimic passion of his eye
Was turned to actual agony,
His hand like summer sapling shook,
Terror and guilt were in his look.
Denzil he judged, in time of need,
Fit counsellor for evil deed,
And thus apart his counsel broke,
While with a ghastly smile he spoke.

XI.

"'As, in the pageants of the stage,
The dead awake in this wild age,
Mortham—whom all men deemed decreed
In his own deadly snare to bleed,
Slain by a bravo, whom, o'er sea,
He trained to aid in murthering me,—
Mortham has 'scaped; the coward shot
The steed, but harmed the rider nought.'"
Here, with an execration fell,
Bertram leaped up, and paced the cell;
"Thine own gray head, or bosom dark,"
He muttered, "may be surer mark!"
Then sate, and signed to Edmund, pale
With terror, to resume his tale.
"Wycliffe went on: 'Mark with what flights
Of wildered reverie he writes.

THE LETTER.

"'Ruler of Mortham's destiny!
Though dead, thy victim lives to thee.
Once had he all that binds to life,
A lovely child, and lovelier wife;
Wealth, fame, and friendship, were his own—
Thou gavest the word, and they are flown.

Mark how he pays thee: to thy hand
He yields his honours and his land,
One boon premised; restore his child!
And, from his native land exiled,
Mortham no more returns, to claim
His lands, his honours, or his name;
Refuse him this, and from the slain
Thou shalt see Mortham rise again.'

XII.

" This billet while the baron read,
His faltering accents showed his dread;
He pressed his forehead with his palm,
Then took a scornful tone and calm;
' Wild as the winds, as billows wild!
What wot I of his spouse or child?
Hither he brought a joyous dame,
Unknown her lineage or her name;
Her, in some frantic fit, he slew;
The nurse and child in fear withdrew.
Heaven be my witness, wist I where
To find this youth, my kinsman's heir,
Unguerdoned, I would give with joy
The father's arms to fold his boy,
And Mortham's lands and towers resign
To the just heir of Mortham's line.'
Thou knowest that scarcely e'en his fear
Suppresses Denzil's cynic sneer;
' Then happy is thy vassal's part,'
He said, ' to ease his patron's heart!
In thine own jailor's watchful care
Lies Mortham's just and rightful heir;
Thy generous wish is fully won,
Redmond O'Neale is Mortham's son.'

XIII.

" Up starting with a frenzied look,
His clenched hand the baron shook:
' Is hell at work? or dost thou rave,
Or darest thou palter with me, slave?
Perchance thou wot'st not, Barnard's towers
Have racks, of strange and ghastly powers.'
Denzil, who well his safety knew,
Firmly rejoined, ' I tell thee true.
Thy racks could give thee but to know
The proofs, which I, untortured, show.
It chanced upon a winter night,
When early snow made Stanmore white,
That very night, when first of all
Redmond O'Neale saw Rokeby hall,
It was my goodly lot to gain
A reliquary and a chain,
Twisted and chased of massive gold.
Demand not how the prize I hold!
It was not given, nor lent, nor sold.
Gilt tablets to the chain were hung,
With letters in the Irish tongue.
I hid my spoil, for there was need
That I should leave the land with speed;
Nor then I deemed it safe to bear
On mine own person gems so rare.
Small heed I of the tablets took,
But since have spelled them by the book,
When some sojourn in Erin's land
Of their wild speech had given command.
But darkling was the sense; the phrase
And language those of other days,
Involved of purpose, as to foil
An interloper's prying toil.
The words, but not the sense, I knew,
Till fortune gave the guiding clue.

XIV.

" ' Three days since, was that clue revealed,
In Thorsgill as I lay concealed,
And heard at full when Rokeby's maid
Her uncle's history displayed;
And now I can interpret well;
Each syllable the tablets tell.
Mark then: fair Edith was the joy
Of old O'Neale of Clandeboy,
But from her sire and country fled,
In secret Mortham's lord to wed.
O'Neale, his first resentment o'er,
Despatched his son to Greta's shore,
Enjoining he should make him known
(Until his farther will were shown)
To Edith, but to her alone.
What of their ill-starred meeting fell,
Lord Wycliffe knows, and none so well.

XV.

" ' O'Neale it was, who, in despair,
Robbed Mortham of his infant heir;
He bred him in their nurture wild,
And called him murdered Connal's child.
Soon died the nurse; the clan believed
What from their chieftain they received.
His purpose was, that ne'er again
The boy should cross the Irish main,
But, like his mountain sires, enjoy
The woods and wastes of Clandeboy.
Then on the land wild troubles came,
And stronger chieftains urged a claim,
And wrested from the old man's hands
His native towers, his father's lands.
Unable then, amid the strife,
To guard young Redmond's rights or life,
Late and reluctant he restores
The infant to his native shores,
With goodly gifts and letters stored,
With many a deep conjuring word,
To Mortham and to Rokeby's lord.
Nought knew the clod of Irish earth,
Who was the guide, of Redmond's birth;
But deemed his chief's commands were laid
On both, by both to be obeyed.
How he was wounded by the way,
I need not, and I list not say.'

XVI.

" ' A wond'rous tale! and grant it true,
What,' Wycliffe answered, ' might I do?
Heaven knows, as willingly as now
I raise the bonnet from my brow,
Would I my kinsman's manors fair
Restore to Mortham or his heir:
But Mortham is distraught—O'Neale
Has drawn for tyranny his steel,
Malignant to our rightful cause,
And trained in Rome's delusive laws.
Hark thee apart!' They whispered long,
Till Denzil's voice grew bold and strong:
' My proofs! I never will,' he said,
' Show mortal man where they are laid.
Nor hope discovery to foreclose,
By giving me to feed the crows;
For I have mates at large, who know
Where I am wont such toys to stow.
Free me from peril and from band,
These tablets are at thy command;
Nor were it hard to form some train,
To wile old Mortham o'er the main.
Then, lunatic's nor papist's hand
Should rest from thine the goodly land.'
' I like thy wit,' said Wycliffe, ' well;
But here in hostage shalt thou dwell.
Thy son, unless my purpose err,
May prove the trustier messenger.

A scroll to Mortham shall he bear
From me, and fetch these tokens rare.
Gold shalt thou have, and that good store,
And freedom, his commission o'er;
But if his faith should chance to fail,
The gibbet frees thee from the jail.'

XVII.

"Meshed in the net himself had twined,
What subterfuge could Denzil find?
He told me, with reluctant sigh,
That hidden here the tokens lie;
Conjured my swift return and aid,
By all he scoffed and disobeyed;
And looked as if the noose were tied,
And I the priest who left his side.
This scroll for Mortham, Wycliffe gave,
Whom I must seek by Greta's wave,
Or in the hut where chief he hides,
Where Thorsgill's forester resides,
(Thence chanced it, wandering in the glade,
That he descried our ambuscade.)
I was dismissed as evening fell,
And reached but now this rocky cell."
"Give Oswald's letter."—Bertram read,
And tore it fiercely, shred by shred:
"All lies and villany! to blind
His noble kinsman's generous mind,
And train him on from day to day,
Till he can take his life away.
And now, declare thy purpose, youth,
Nor dare to answer, save the truth;
If aught I mark of Denzil's art,
I'll tear the secret from thy heart!"

XVIII.

"It needs not. I renounce," he said,
"My tutor and his deadly trade.
Fixed was my purpose to declare
To Mortham, Redmond is his heir;
To tell him in what risk he stands,
And yield these tokens to his hands.
Fixed was my purpose to atone,
Far as I may, the evil done,
And fixed it rests—if I survive
This night, and leave this cave alive."
"And Denzil?" "Let them ply the rack,
E'en till his joints and sinews crack!
If Oswald tear him limb from limb,
What ruth can Denzil claim from him,
Whose thoughtless youth he led astray,
And damned to this unhallowed way?
He schooled me, faith and vows were vain,
Now let my master reap his gain."
"True," answered Bertram, "'tis his meed;
There's retribution in the deed.
But thou—thou art not for our course,
Hast fear, hast pity, hast remorse;
And he with us the gale who braves,
Must heave such cargo to the waves,
Or lag with overloaded prore,
While barks unburthened reach the shore."

XIX.

He paused, and, stretching him at length,
Seemed to repose his bulky strength.
Communing with his secret mind,
As half he sate, and half reclined,
One ample hand his forehead pressed,
And one was dropped across his breast.
The shaggy eyebrows deeper came
Above his eyes of swarthy flame;
His lip of pride awhile forebore
The haughty curve till then it wore;
The unaltered fierceness of his look
A shade of darkened sadness took,
For dark and sad a presage pressed
Resistlessly on Bertram's breast,
And when he spoke, his wonted tone,
So fierce, abrupt, and brief, was gone.
His voice was steady, low, and deep,
Like distant waves when breezes sleep;
And sorrow mixed with Edmund's fear,
Its low unbroken depth to hear.

XX.

"Edmund, in thy sad tale I find
The wo that warped my patron's mind;
'Twould wake the fountains of the eye
In other men, but mine are dry.
Mortham must never see the fool,
That sold himself base Wycliffe's tool!
Yet less from thirst of sordid gain,
Than to avenge supposed disdain.
Say, Bertram rues his fault; a word,
Till now, from Bertram never heard.
Say, too, that Mortham's lord he prays
To think but on their former days,
On Quariana's beach and rock,
On Cayo's bursting battle-shock,
On Darien's sands and deadly dew,
And on the dart Tlatzeca threw;
Perchance my patron yet may hear
More that may grace his comrade's bier,
My soul hath felt a secret weight,
A warning of approaching fate;
A priest had said, Return, repent!
As well to bid that rock be rent.
Firm as that flint, I face mine end;
My heart may burst, but cannot bend.

XXI.

"The dawning of my youth, with awe
And prophecy, the dalesmen saw;
For over Redesdale it came,
As bodeful as their beacon-flame.
Edmund, thy years were scarcely mine,
When, challenging the clans of Tyne,
To bring their best my brand to prove,
O'er Hexham's altar hung my glove;[1]
But Tynedale, nor in tower nor town,
Held champion meet to take it down.
My noontide India may declare;
Like her fierce sun I fired the air!
Like him, to wood and cave bade fly
Her natives, from mine angry eye.
Panama's maids shall long look pale
When Risingham inspires the tale;
Chili's dark matrons long shall tame
The froward child with Bertram's name.
And now, my race of terror run,
Mine be the eve of tropic sun!
No pale gradations quench his ray,
No twilight dews his wrath allay;
With disk like battle-target red,
He rushes to his burning bed,
Dies the wide wave with bloody light,
Then sinks at once—and all is night.

XXII.

"Now to thy mission, Edmund. Fly,
Seek Mortham out, and bid him hie
To Richmond, where his troops are laid,
And lead his force to Redmond's aid.
Say, till he reaches Eglistone,
A friend will watch to guard his son.
Now, fare thee well; for night draws on,
And I would rest me here alone."

Despite his ill-dissembled fear,
There swam in Edmund's eye a tear;
A tribute to the courage high,
Which stooped not in extremity.
But strove, irregularly great,
To triumph o'er approaching fate!
Bertram beheld the dew-drop start,
It almost touched his iron heart:
" I did not think there lived," he said,
" One who would tear for Bertram shed."
He loosened then his baldric's hold,
A buckle broad of massive gold;
" Of all the spoil that paid his pains,
But this with Risingham remains,
And this, dear Edmund, thou shalt take,
And wear it long for Bertram's sake.
Once more—to Mortham speed amain;
Farewell! and turn thee not again."

XXIII.

The night has yielded to the morn,
And far the hours of prime are worn.
Oswald, who, since the dawn of day,
Had cursed his messenger's delay,
Impatient questioned now his train,
" Was Denzil's son returned again?"
It chanced there answered of the crew,
A menial, who young Edmund knew:
" No son of Denzil this," he said;
" A peasant boy from Winston glade,
For song and minstrelsy renowned,
And knavish pranks, the hamlets round."—
—" Not Denzil's son!—from Winston vale!
Then it was false, that specious tale;
Or, worse—he hath despatched the youth
To show to Mortham's lord its truth.
Fool that I was!—But 'tis too late;—
This is the very turn of fate!
The tale, or true or false, relies
On Denzil's evidence:—He dies!—
—Ho! provost-martial! instantly
Lead Denzil to the gallows tree!
Allow him not a parting word:
Short be the shrift, and sure the cord!
Then let his gory head appal
Marauders from the castle wall.
Lead forth thy guard, that duty done,
With best despatch to Eglistone.—
—Basil, tell Wilfrid he must straight
Attend me at the castle-gate."

XXIV.

" Alas!" the old domestic said,
And shook his venerable head,
" Alas! my lord! full ill to-day
May my young master brook the way!
The leech has spoke with grave alarm,
Of unseen hurt, of secret harm,
Of sorrow lurking at the heart,
That mars and lets his healing art."
—" Tush, tell not me!—Romantic boys
Pine themselves sick for airy toys.
I will find cure for Wilfrid soon;
Bid him for Eglistone to boune,
And quick—I hear the dull death-drum
Tell Denzil's hour of fate is come."
He paused with scornful smile, and then
Resumed his train of thought agen.
" Now comes my fortune's crisis near!
Entreaty boots not—instant fear,
Nought else, can bend Matilda's pride,
Or win her to be Wilfrid's bride.
But when she sees the scaffold placed,
With axe and block and headsman graced;
And when she deems, that to deny
Dooms Redmond and her sire to die,
She must give way.—Then, were the line
Of Rokeby once combined with mine,
I gain the weather-gage of fate! .
If Mortham come, he comes too late,
While I, allied thus and prepared,
Bid him defiance to his beard.
—If she prove stubborn, shall I dare
To drop the axe?—soft! pause we there.
Mortham still lives—yon youth may tell
His tale—and Fairfax loves him well;
Else, wherefore should I now delay
To sweep this Redmond from my way?
But she to piety perforce
Must yield.—Without there! Sound to horse."

XXV.

'Twas bustle in the court below,—
" Mount, and march forward!"—forth they go;
Steeds neigh and trample all around,
Steel rings, spears glimmer, trumpets sound.
Just then was sung his parting hymn;
And Denzil turned his eyeballs dim.
And scarcely conscious what he sees,
Follows the horsemen down the Tees,
And scarcely conscious what he hears,
The trumpets tingle in his ears.
O'er the long bridge they're sweeping now,
The van is hid by green-wood bough;
But ere the rearward had passed o'er,
Guy Denzil heard and saw no more!
One stroke, upon the castle bell,
To Oswald rung his dying knell.

XXVI.

O for that pencil, erst profuse
Of chivalry's emblazoned hues,
That traced, of old, in Woodstock bower,
The pageant of the leaf and flower,
And bodied forth the tourney high,
Held for the hand of Emily!
Then might I paint the tumult broad,
That to the crowded abbey flowed,
And poured, as with an ocean's sound,
Into the church's ample bound!
Then might I show each varying mien,
Exulting, woful, or serene;
Indifference with his idiot stare,
And Sympathy with anxious air;
Paint the dejected cavalier,
Doubtful, disarmed, and sad of cheer;
And his proud foe, whose formal eye
Claimed conquest now and mastery;
And the brute crowd, whose envious zeal
Huzzas each turn of Fortune's wheel,
And loudest shouts when lowest lie
Exalted worth, and station high.
Yet what may such a wish avail?
'Tis mine to tell an onward tale,
Hurrying, as best I can, along,
The hearers and the hasty song;
Like traveller when approaching home,
Who sees the shades of evening come,
And must not now his course delay,
Or choose the fair, but winding way;
Nay, scarcely may his pace suspend,
Where o'er his head the wildings bend,
To bless the breeze that cools his brow,
Or snatch a blossom from the bough.

XXVII.

The reverend pile lay wild and waste,
Profaned, dishonoured, and defaced.

Through storied lattices no more
In softened light the sunbeams pour,
Gilding the Gothic sculpture rich
Of shrine, and monument, and niche.
The civil fury of the time
Made sport of sacrilegious crime;
For dark Fanaticism rent
Altar, and screen, and ornament,
And peasant hands the tombs o'erthrew
Of Bowes, of Rokeby, and Fitz-Hugh.
And now was seen unwonted sight,
In holy walls a scaffold dight!
Where once the priest, of grace divine,
Dealt to his flock the mystic sign,
There stood the block displayed, and there
The headsman grim his hatchet bare;
And for the word of Hope and Faith,
Resounded loud a doom of death.
Thrice the fierce trumpet's breath was heard,
And echoed thrice the herald's word,
Dooming, for breach of martial laws,
And treason to the commons' cause,
The knight of Rokeby and O'Neale
To stoop their heads to block and steel.
The trumpets flourished high and shrill,
Then was a silence dead and still;
And silent prayers to heaven were cast,
And stifling sobs were bursting fast,
Till from the crowd begun to rise
Murmurs of sorrow or surprise,
And from the distant aisles there came
Deep-muttered threats, with Wycliffe's name.

XXVIII.

But Oswald, guarded by his band,
Powerful in evil, waved his hand.
And bade sedition's voice be dead,
On peril of the murmurer's head.
Then first his glance sought Rokeby's knight;
Who gazed on the tremendous sight,
As calm as if he came a guest
To kindred baron's feudal feast,
As calm as if that trumpet-call
Were summons to the bannered hall;
Firm in his loyalty he stood,
And prompt to seal it with his blood.
With downcast look drew Oswald nigh,—
He durst not cope with Rokeby's eye!
And said, with low and faltering breath,
"Thou know'st the terms of life and death."
The knight then turned, and sternly smiled;
"The maiden is mine only child,
Yet shall my blessing leave her head,
If with a traitor's son she wed."
Then Redmond spoke: "The life of one
Might thy malignity atone.
On me be flung a double guilt!
Spare Rokeby's blood, let mine be spilt!"
Wycliffe had listened to his suit,
But dread prevailed, and he was mute.

XXIX.

And now he pours his choice of fear
In secret on Matilda's ear;
"An union formed with me and mine
Ensures the faith of Rokeby's line.
Consent, and all this dread array
Like morning dream shall pass away;
Refuse, and, by my duty pressed,
I give the word—thou know'st the rest."
Matilda, still and motionless,
With terror heard the dread address,
Pale as the sheeted maid who dies
To hopeless love a sacrifice;
Then wrung her hands in agony,
And round her cast bewildered eye,
Now on the scaffold glanced, and now
On Wycliffe's unrelenting brow.
She veiled her face, and, with a voice
Scarce audible,—"I make my choice!
Spare but their lives!—for aught beside,
Let Wilfrid's doom my fate decide.
He once was generous!"—as she spoke,
Dark Wycliffe's joy in triumph broke:—
"Wilfrid, where loitered ye so late?—
Why upon Basil rest thy weight?—
Art spell-bound by enchanter's wand?—
Kneel, kneel, and take her yielded hand;
Thank her with raptures, simple boy!
Should tears and trembling speak thy joy?"
"O hush, my sire! to prayer and tear
Of mine thou hast refused thine ear:
But now the awful hour draws on,
When truth must speak in loftier tone."

XXX.

He took Matilda's hand:—"Dear maid!
Couldst thou so injure me," he said,
"Of thy poor friend so basely deem,
As blend him with this barbarous scheme?
Alas my efforts, made in vain,
Might well have saved this added pain.
But now, bear witness earth and heaven,
That ne'er was hope to mortal given,
So twisted with the strings of life,
As this—to call Matilda wife!
I bid it now for ever part,
And with the effort bursts my heart."
His feeble frame was worn so low,
With wounds, with watching, and with wo,
That nature could no more sustain
The agony of mental pain.
He kneeled—his lip her hand had pressed,
Just then he felt the stern arrest;
Lower and lower sunk his head,—
They raised him,—but the life was fled!
Then first alarmed, his sire and train
Tried every aid, but tried in vain.
The soul, too soft its ills to bear,
Had left our mortal hemisphere,
And sought in better world, the meed
To blameless life by heaven decreed.

XXXI.

The wretched sire beheld aghast,
With Wilfrid all his projects past.
All turned and centered on his son,
On Wilfrid all—and he was gone,
"And am I childless now," he said,
"Childless, through that relentless maid!
A lifetime's arts, in vain essayed,
Are bursting on their artist's head!—
Here lies my Wilfrid dead—and there
Comes hated Mortham for his heir,
Eager to knit in happy band
With Rokeby's heiress Redmond's hand.
And shall their triumph soar o'er all
The schemes deep-laid to work their fall?
No!—deeds which prudence might not dare,
Appal not vengeance and despair.
The murderess weeps upon his bier—
I'll change to real that feigned tear!
They all shall share destruction's shock!—
Ho! lead the captives to the block!"
But ill his provost could divine
His feelings, and forebore the sign.
"Slave! to the block!—or I, or they,
Shall face the judgment-seat this day!"

XXXII.

The outmost crowd have heard a sound,
Like horse's hoof on hardened ground;
Nearer it came, and yet more near,—
The very deaths-men paused to hear.
'Tis in the church-yard now—the tread
Hath waked the dwelling of the dead!
Fresh sod, and old sepulchral stone,
Return the tramp in wearied tone.
All eyes upon the gate-way hung,
When through the Gothic arch there sprung
A horseman armed, at headlong speed[2]—
Sable his cloak, his plume, his steed.
Fire from the flinty floor was spurned,
The vaults unwonted clang returned!
One instant's glance around he threw,
From saddle-bow his pistol drew.
Grimly determined was his look!
His charger with the spurs he strook—
All scattered backward as he came,
For all knew Bertram Risingham!
Three bounds that noble courser gave;
The first has reached the central nave,
The second cleared the chancel wide,
The third,—he was at Wycliffe's side.
Full levelled at the baron's head,
Rung the report—the bullet sped—
And to his long account, and last,
Without a groan dark Oswald past!
All was so quick, that it might seem
A flash of lightning, or a dream.

XXXIII.

While yet the smoke the deed conceals,
Bertram his ready charger wheels;
But floundered on the pavement floor
The steed, and down the rider bore,
And bursting in the headlong sway,
The faithless saddle-girths gave way.
'Twas while he toiled him to be freed,
And with the rein to raise the steed,
That from amazement's iron trance
All Wycliffe's soldiers waked at once.
Sword, halbert, musket butt, their blows
Hailed upon Bertram as he rose:
A score of pikes, with each a wound,
Bore down and pinned him to the ground;
But still his struggling force he rears,
'Gainst hacking brands and stabbing spears;
Thrice from assailants shook him free,
Once gained his feet, and twice his knee.
By tenfold odds oppressed at length,
Despite his struggles and his strength,
He took a hundred mortal wounds,
As mute as fox 'mongst mangling hounds;
And when he died, his parting groan
Had more of laughter than of moan!
—They gazed, as when a lion dies,
And hunters scarcely trust their eyes,
But bend their weapons on the slain,
Lest the grim king should rouse again!
Then blow and insult some renewed,
And from the trunk the head had hewed,
But Basil's voice the deed forbade;
A mantle o'er the corse he laid:—
" Fell as he was in act and mind,
He left no bolder heart behind:
Then give him, for a soldier meet,
A soldier's cloak for winding sheet."—

XXXIV.

No more of death and dying pang,
No more of trump and bugle clang,
Though through the sounding woods there come
Banner and bugle, trump and drum.
Armed with such powers as well had freed
Young Redmond at his utmost need,
And backed with such a band of horse
As might less ample powers enforce;
Possessed of every proof and sign
That gave an heir to Mortham's line,
And yielded to a father's arms
An image of his Edith's charms,—
Mortham is come, to hear and see
Of this strange morn the history.
What saw he?—not the church's floor,
Cumbered with dead and stained with gore;
What heard he?—not the clamorous crowd,
That shout their gratulations loud:
Redmond he saw and heard alone,
Clasped him, and sobbed, " My son, my son!"

XXXV.

This chanced upon a summer morn,
When yellow waved the heavy corn;
But when brown August o'er the land
Called forth the reaper's busy band,
A gladsome sight the sylvan road
From Eglistone to Mortham showed.
Awhile the hardy rustic leaves
The task to bind and pile the sheaves,
And maids their sickles fling aside,
To gaze on bridegroom and on bride,
And childhood's wondering group draws near,
And from the gleaner's hand the ear
Drops, while she folds them for a prayer
And blessing on the lovely pair.
'Twas then the maid of Rokeby gave
Her plighted troth to Redmond brave;
And Teesdale can remember yet,
How Fate to Virtue paid her debt,
And, for their troubles, bade them prove
A lengthened life of peace and love.

Time and Tide had thus their sway,
Yielding, like an April day,
Smiling noon for sullen morrow,
Years of joy for hours of sorrow!

NOTES TO CANTO I.

1. On Barnard's towers, and Tees's stream, &c.—P. 190.

" Barnard castle," saith old Leland, " standeth stately upon Tees." It is founded upon a very high bank, and its ruins impend over the river, including within the area a circuit of six acres and upwards. This once magnificent fortress derives its name from its founder, Barnard Baliol, the ancestor of the short and unfortunate dynasty of that name, which succeeded to the Scottish throne under the patronage of Edward I and Edward III. Baliol's tower, afterwards mentioned in the poem, is a round tower of great size, situated at the western extremity of the building. It bears marks of great antiquity, and was remarkable for the curious construction of its vaulted roof, which has been lately greatly injured by the operations of some persons to whom the tower has been leased for the purpose of making patent shot! The prospect from the top of Baliol's tower commands a rich and magnificent view of the wooded valley of the Tees.

Barnard castle often changed masters during the middle ages. Upon the forfeiture of the unfortunate John Baliol, the first king of Scotland of that family, Edward I seized this fortress among the other English estates of his refractory vassal.

It was afterwards vested in the Beauchamps of Warwick, and in the Staffords of Buckingham, and was also sometimes in the possession of the bishops of Durham, and sometimes in that of the crown. Richard III is said to have enlarged and strengthened its fortifications, and to have made it for sometime his principal residence, for the purpose of bridling and suppressing the Lancastrian faction in the northern counties. From the Staffords, Barnard castle passed, probably by marriage, into the possession of the powerful Nevilles, earls of Westmoreland, and belonged to the last representative of that family when he engaged with the earl of Northumberland in the ill-concerted insurrection of the twelfth of queen Elizabeth. Upon this occasion, however, sir George Bowes of Sheatlam, who held great possessions in the neighbourhood, anticipated the two insurgent earls, by seizing upon and garrisoning Barnard castle, which he held out for ten days against all their forces, and then surrendered it upon honourable terms. See Sadler's State Papers, vol. ii, p. 330. In a ballad, contained in Percy's Reliques of Ancient Poetry, vol. i, the siege is thus commemorated:—

Then Sir George Bowes he straightway rose,
After them some spoyle to make;
These noble erles turned back againe,
And aye they vowed that knight to take.

That baron he to his castle fled,
To Barnard castle then fled he;
The uttermost walles were eathe to won,
The erles have wonne them presentlie.

The uttermost walles were lime and bricke;
But though they won them soon anone,
Long ere they won the innermost walles,
For they were cut in rock and stone.

By the suppression of this rebellion, and the consequent forfeiture of the earl of Westmoreland, Barnard castle reverted to the crown, and was sold or leased out to Car, earl of Somerset, the guilty and unhappy favourite of James I. It was afterwards granted to sir Henry Vane the elder, and was therefore, in all probability, occupied for the parliament, whose interest during the civil war was so keenly espoused by the Vanes. It is now, with the other estates of that family, the property of the right honourable earl of Darlington.

2. ——————no human ear,
Unsharpened by revenge and fear,
Could e'er distinguish horse's clank.—P. 191.

I have had occasion to remark, in real life, the effect of keen and fervent anxiety in giving acuteness to the organs of sense. My gifted friend, Miss Joanna Baillie, whose dramatic works display such intimate acquaintance with the operations of human passion, has not omitted this remarkable circumstance:

"*De Montfort (off his guard.)* 'Tis Rezenvelt; I heard his well-known foot!
From the first stair-case mounting step by step.
Freb. How quick an ear thou hast for distant sound!
I heard him not.
[*De Montfort looks embarrassed, and is silent.*"

3. The morion's plumes his visage hide,
And the buff coat, in ample fold,
Mantles his form's gigantic mould.—P. 191.

The use of complete suits of armour was fallen into disuse during the civil war, though they were still worn by leaders of rank and importance.—"In the reign of king James I," says our military antiquary, "no great alterations were made in the article of defensive armour, except that the buff coat, or jerkin, which was originally worn under the cuirass, now became frequently a substitute for it, it having been found that a good buff leather would of itself resist the stroke of a sword; this, however, only occasionally took place among the light-armed cavalry and infantry, complete suits of armour being still used among the heavy horse. Buff coats continued to be worn by the city trained-bands till within the memory of persons now living, so that defensive armour may in some measure be said to have terminated in the same materials with which it began, that is, the skins of animals or leather."—Grose's *Military Antiquities*, Lond. 1801, 4to. vol. ii, p. 323.

Of the buff coats which were worn over the corslet, several are yet preserved, and captain Grose has given an engraving of one which was used in the time of Charles I, by sir Francis Rhodes, bart. of Balbrough-hall, Derbyshire. They were usually lined with silk or linen, secured before by buttons, or by a lace, and often richly decorated with gold or silver embroidery. From the following curious account of a dispute respecting a buff coat, between an old roundhead captain and a justice of peace, by whom his arms were seized after the restoration, we learn that the value and importance of this defensive garment were considerable. "A party of horse came to my house commanded by Mr. Peebles; and he told me he was come for my arms, and that I must deliver them. I asked him for his order. He told me had a better order than Oliver used to give; and, clapping his hand upon his sword hilt, he said that was his order. I told him, if he had none but that it was not sufficient to take my arms; and then he pulled out his warrant, and I read it. It was signed by Wentworth Armitage, a general warrant to search all persons they suspected, and so left the power to the soldiers at their pleasure. They came to us at Coalley-hall, about sun-setting; and I caused a candle to be lighted, and conveyed Peebles into the room where my arms were. My arms were near the kitchen fire; and there they took away fowling-pieces, pistols, muskets, carabines, and such like, better than 20*l*. Then Mr. Peebles asked me for my buff coat; and I told him they had no order to take away my apparel. He told me I was not to dispute their orders: but if I would not deliver it, he would carry me away prisoner, and had me out of doors. Yet he let me alone unto the next morning, that I must wait upon sir John, at Halifax; and coming before him, he threatened me, and said it I did not send the coat, for it was too good for me to keep. I told him it was not in his power to demand my apparel; and he, growing into a fit, called me rebel and traitor, and said if I did not send the coat with all speed, he would send me where I did not like well I told him I was no rebel, and he did not well to call me so before these soldiers and gentlemen, to make me the mark for every one to shoot at. I departed the room, yet, notwithstanding all the threatenings, did not send the coat. But the next day he sent John Lyster, the son of Mr. Thomas Lyster, of Shipden-hall, for this coat, with a letter verbatim thus: 'Mr. Hodgson, I admire you will play the child so with me as you have done, in writing such an inconsiderate letter. Let me have the buff coat sent forthwith, otherwise you shall so hear from me as will not very well please you. I was not at home when this messenger came; but I had ordered my wife not to deliver it, but if they would take it, let them look to it: and he took it away; and one of sir John's brethren wore it many years after.

They sent captain Batt to compound with my wife about it; but I sent word I would have my own again: but he advised me to take a price for it, and make no more ado. I said it was hard to take my arms and apparel too; I had laid out a great deal of money for them; I hoped they did not mean to destroy me, by taking my goods illegally from me. He said he would make up the matter, if I pleased, betwixt us; and, it seems, had brought sir John to a price for my coat. I would not have taken 10*l.* for it: he would have given about 4*l.*; but wanting my receipt for the money, he kept both sides, and I had never satisfaction."—*Memoirs of Captain Hodgson*, Edin. 1806, p. 178.

4. On his dark face a scorching clime,
And toil, had done the work of time, &c.—P. 191.

In this character I have attempted to sketch one of those West Indian adventurers, who, during the course of the seventeenth century, were popularly known by the name of Buccaneers. The successes of the English in the predatory incursions upon Spanish America, during the reign of Elizabeth, had never been forgotten; and from that period downward, the exploits of Drake and Raleigh were imitated upon a smaller scale indeed, but with equally desperate valour, by small bands of pirates, gathered from all nations, but chiefly French and English. The engrossing policy of the Spaniards tended greatly to increase the number of these free-booters, from whom their commerce and colonies suffered, in the issue, dreadful calamity. The Windward Islands, which the Spaniards did not deem worthy of their own occupation, had been gradually settled by adventurers of the French and English nations. But Frederic of Toledo, who was despatched in 1630, with a powerful fleet against the Dutch, had orders from the court of Madrid to destroy these colonies, whose vicinity at once offended the pride, and excited the jealous suspicions of their Spanish neighbours. This order the Spanish admiral executed with sufficient rigour; but the only consequence was, that the planters, being rendered desperate by persecution, began, under the well-known name of buccaneers, to commence a retaliation so horridly savage that the perusal makes the reader shudder. When they carried on their depredations at sea, they boarded, without respect to disparity of number, every Spanish vessel that came in their way; and, demeaning themselves, both in the battle and after the conquest, more like demons than human beings, they succeeded in impressing their enemies with a sort of superstitious terror, which rendered them incapable of offering effectual resistance. From piracy at sea they advanced to making predatory descents on the Spanish territories, in which they displayed the same furious and irresistible valour, the same thirst of spoil, and the same brutal inhumanity to their captives. The large treasures which they acquired in their adventures, they dissipated by the most unbounded licentiousness in gaming, women, wine, and debauchery of every species. When their spoils were thus wasted, they entered into some new association, and undertook new adventures. For further particulars concerning these extraordinary banditti, the reader may consult Raynal, or the common and popular book called the History of the Buccaneers.

5. ——— On Marston heath
Met, front to front, the ranks of death.—P. 192.

The well-known and desperate battle of Long-Marston moor, which terminated so unfortunately for the cause of Charles, commenced under very different auspices. Prince Rupert had marched with an army of 20,000 men for the relief of York, then besieged by sir Thomas Fairfax, at the head of the parliamentary army, and the earl of Leven, with the Scottish auxiliary forces. In this he so completely succeeded, that he compelled the besiegers to retreat to Marston moor, a large open plain, about eight miles distant from the city. Thither they were followed by the prince, who had now united to his army the garrison of York, probably not less than ten thousand men strong, under the gallant marquis (then earl) of Newcastle. Whitelocke has recorded, with much impartiality, the following particulars of this eventful day:—"The right wing of the parliament was commanded by sir Thomas Fairfax, and consisted of all his horse, and three regiments of the Scots horse; the left wing was commanded by the earl of Manchester and colonel Cromwell. One body of their foot was commanded by lord Fairfax, and consisted of his foot, and two brigades of the Scots foot for a reserve; and the main body of the rest of the foot was commanded by general Leven.

"The right wing of the prince's army was commanded by the earl of Newcastle, the left wing by the prince himself, and the main body by general Goring, sir Charles Lucas, and major-general Porter: thus were both sides drawn up into battalia.

"July 3d, 1644. In this posture both armies faced each other, and about seven o'clock in the morning the fight began between them. The prince, with his left wing, fell on the parliament's right wing, routed them, and pursued them a great way; the like did general Goring, Lucas, and Porter, upon the parliament's main body. The three generals, giving all for lost, hasted out of the field, and many of their soldiers fled, and threw down their arms; the king's forces, too eagerly following them, the victory, now almost achieved by them, was again snatched out of their hands. For colonel Cromwell, with the brave regiment of his countrymen, and sir Thomas Fairfax, having rallied some of his horse, fell upon the prince's right wing, where the earl of Newcastle was, and routed them; and the rest of their companions rallying, they fell all together upon the divided bodies of Rupert and Goring, and totally dispersed them, and obtained a complete victory after three hours fight.

"From this battle and the pursuit some reckon were buried 7000 Englishmen; all agree that above 3000 of the prince's men were slain in the battle, besides those in the chase, and 3000 prisoners taken, many of their chief officers, 25 pieces of ordnance, 47 colours, 10,000 arms, two wagons of carabines and pistols, 130 barrels of powder, and all their bag and baggage."—*Whitelocke's Memoirs*, Lond. 1682, fol. p. 89.

Lord Clarendon informs us that the king, previous to receiving the true account of the battle, had been informed, by an express from Oxford, "that prince Rupert had not only relieved York, but totally defeated the Scots, with many particulars to confirm it, all which was so much believed there, that they had made public fires of joy for the victory."

6. Monckton and Mitton told the news,
How troops of roundheads choked the Ouse,
And many a bonny Scot, aghast,
Spurring his palfrey northward, past,
Cursing the day when zeal or meed
First lured their Lesley o'er the Tweed.—P. 193.

Monckton and Mitton are villages near the river

Ouse, and not very distant from the field of battle. The particulars of the action were violently disputed at the time; but the following extract, from the manuscript history of the baronial house of Somerville, is decisive as to the flight of the Scottish general, the earl of Leven. The particulars are given by the author of the history on the authority of his father, then the representative of the family. This curious manuscript has been published by consent of my noble friend, the present lord Somerville.

"The order of this great battell, wherin both armies was neer of ane equall number, consisting, to the best calculatione, neer to three score thousand men upon both sydes, I shall not take upon me to deseryve; albeit, from the draughts then taken upon the place, and information I receaved from this gentleman, who being then a volunteer, as having no command, had opportunitie and libertie to ryde from one wing of the armie to the other, to view all ther severall squadrons of horse and battallions of foot how formed, and in what manner drawn up, with every other circumstance relating to the fight, and that both as to the king's armies and that of the parliament's, amongst whom, untill the engadgment, he went from statione to statione to observe ther order and form; but that the descriptione of this battell, with the various sueeess on both sides at the beginning, with the losse of the royal armie, and the sad effeets that followed that misfortune as to his majestie's interest, hes been so often done already by English authors, little to our commendatione, how justly I shall not dispute, seeing the truth is, as our principall generall fled that night neer fourtie mylles from the place of the fight, that part of the armie where he commanded being totallie routed: but it is as true, that much of the victorie is attributed to the good conduet of David Lesselie, lievetennent-generall of our horse. Cromwell, himself, that minione of fortune, but the rod of God's wrath, to punish eftirward three rebellious nations, disdained not to take orders from him, albeit then in the same qualitie of command for the parliament, as being lievetennent-generall to the earl of Manchester's horse, whom, with the assistance of the Scots horse, haveing routed the prinee's right wing, as he had done that of the parliament's. These two commanders of the horse upon that wing wisely restrained the great bodies of ther horse from persuing these broeken troups, but, wheeling to the left-hand, falls in upon the naked flanks of the prinee's main battalion of foot, carrying them doune with great violenee; nether mett they with any great resistanee untill they eame to the marques of Neweastle his battallione of white coats, who, first peppering them soundly with ther shott, when they eame to charge, stoutly boor them up with their picks that they could not enter to break them. Here the parliament's horse of that wing receaved ther greatest losse, and a stop for sometyme putt to ther hoped-for victorie; and that only by the stont resistanee of this gallant battallione, which consisted neer of four thousand foot, untill at length a Scots regiment of dragouns, commanded by collonell Frizeall, with other two, was brought to open them upon some hand, which at length they did, when all the ammunitione was spent. Having refused quarters, every man fell in the same order and ranke wherein he had foughten.

"Be this execution was done, the prince returned from the persuite of the right wing of the parliament's horse, which he had beaten and followed too farre, to the losse of the battell, which certanely, in all men's opinions, he might have eary-ed, if he had not been too violent upon the persuite: which gave his enemies upon the left-hand opportunitie to disperse and eut doune his infantrie, who, haveing cleared the field of all the standing bodies of foot, wer now, with many
of ther oune, standing ready to receave the charge of his allmost spent horses, if he should attempt it, which the prince observing, and seeing all lost, he retreated to Yorke with two thousand horse. Notwithstanding of this, ther was that night such a consternatione in the parliament armies, that it's believed by most of those that wer there present, that if the prinee, haveing so great a body of horse inteire, had made ane on fall that night, or the ensueing morning be tyme, he had carryed the victorie out of ther hands; for it's eertane, by the morning's light, he had rallyed a body of ten thousand men, whereof tiier was neer three thousand gallant horse. These, with the assistance of the toune and garrisoune of Yorke, might have done much to have recovered the victory, for the losse of this battell in effeet lost the king and his interest in the three kingdomes, his majestie never being able eftir this to make head in the north, but lost his garrisons every day.

"As for generall Lesselie, in the beginning of this flight haveing that part of the army quite broeken, where he had placed himself, by the valour of the prince, he imagined, and was confermed by the opinione of others then upon the place with him, that the battell was irrecoverably lost, seeing they wer fleeing upon all hands; theirfore they humblie intreated his excellence to reteir and wait his better fortune; which, without farder advyseing, he did; and never drew bridle until he eame the lenth of Leads, having ridden all that night with a cloak of *drap de berrie* about him, belonging to this gentleman of whom I write, then in his retinue, with many other officers of good qualitie. It was neer twelve the next day before they had the certanety who was master of the field, when at length there arryves ane express, sent by David Lesselie, to aequaint the general they had obtained a most glorious victory, and that the prinee, with his broeken troops, was fled from Yorke. This intelligence was somewhat amazeing to these gentlemen that had been eye witnesses to the disorder of the armie before ther retearing, and had then accompanied the general in his flight, who, being much wearyed that evening of the battell with ordering his armie, and now quite spent with his long journey in the night, had easten himselfe doune upon a bed to rest, when this gentleman comeing quyetly into his chamber, he awoke, and hastily eries out, 'Lievetennent-eollonell, what newes?'—'All is safe, may it please your excellence, the parliament's armie hes obtained a great victory;' and then delyvers the letter. The generall, upon the hearing of this, knocked upon his breast and sayes, 'I would to God I had dyed upon the place,' and then opens the letter, which, in a few lines, gave ane account of the victory, and in the close pressed his speedy returne to the armie, which he did the next day, being accompanyed some mylles back by this gentleman, who then takes his leave of him, and receaved at parting many expressions of kyndenesse, with promises that he would never be unmyndful of his care and respect towards him; and in the

end he intreats him to present his service to all his friends and acquaintances in Scotland. Thereftir the generall sets forward in his journey for the armie, as this gentleman did for ,
in order to his transportatione for Scotland, where he arryved sex dayes eftir the fight of Mestoune Muir, and gave the first true account and descriptione of that great battell, wherein the covenanters then gloryed soe much, that they impiously boasted the Lord had now signally appeared for his cause and people, it being ordinary for them, dureing the wholl time of this warre, to attribute the greatness of their success to the goodness and justice of their cause, until Divine Justice trysted them with some cross dispensatione, and then you might have heard this language from them, 'That it pleases the Lord to give his ounc the heavyest end of the tree to bear, that the saints and the people of God must still be sufferers while they are here away, that the malignant party was God's rod to punish them for ther unthankfulnesse, which in the end he will cast into the fire;' with a thousand other expressions and scripture citations, profanely and blasphemously uttered by them to palliate their villanie and rebellion."—*Memoire of the Somervilles*, Edinb. 1815.

7. With his barbed horse, fresh tidings say
Stout Cromwell has redeemed the day.—P. 193.

Cromwell, with his regiment of cuirassiers, had a principal share in turning the fate of the day at Marston-moor, which was equally matter of triumph to the independents, and of grief and heart-burning to the presbyterians and to the Scottish. Principal Baillie expresses his dissatisfaction as follows:—

"The independents sent up one quickly to assure that all the glory of that night was theirs; and they and their major-general Cromwell had done it all there alone: but captain Stuart afterward showed the vanity and falsehood of their disgraceful relation. God gave us that victory wonderfully. There were three generals on each side, Lesley, Fairfax, and Manchester; Rupert, Newcastle, and King. Within half an hour and less, all six took them to their heels; this to you alone. The disadvantage of the ground, and violence of the flower of prince Rupert's horse, carried all our right-wing down; only Eglinton kept ground, to his great loss; his lieutenant-crowner, a brave man, I fear shall die, and his son Robert be mutilated of an arm. Lindsay had the greatest hazard of any; but the beginning of the victory was from David Lesley, who before was much suspected of evil designs: he, with the Scots and Cromwell's horse, having the advantage of the ground, did dissipate all before them."—*Baillie's Letters and Journals*, Edinb. 1785, 8vo. ii, 36.

8. Do not my native dales prolong
Of Percy Rede the tragic song,
Trained forward to his bloody fall,
By Girsonfield, that treacherous Hall?—P. 193.

In a poem, entitled "The Lay of the Reedwater Minstrel," Newcastle, 1809, this tale, with many others peculiar to the valley of the Reed, is commemorated:—"The particulars of the traditional story of Percy Reed of Troughend, and the Halls of Girsonfield, the author had from a descendant of the family of Reed. From this account it appears that Percival Reed, esquire, a keeper of Reedsdale, was betrayed by the Halls (hence denominated the false-hearted Ha's) to a band of moss-troopers of the name of Crosier, who slew him at Batinghope, near the source of the Reed.

"The Halls were, after the murder of Percy Reed, held in such universal abhorrence and contempt by the inhabitants of Reedsdale, for their cowardly and treacherous behaviour, that they were obliged to leave the country." In another passage we are informed that the ghost of the injured borderer is supposed to haunt the banks of a brook called the Pringle. These Reeds of Troughend were a very ancient family, as may be conjectured from their deriving their surname from the river on which they had their mansion. An epitaph on one of their tombs affirms, that the family held their lands of Troughend, which are situated on the Reed, nearly opposite to Otterburn, for the incredible space of nine hundred years.

9. And near the spot that gave me name,
The moated mound of Risingham,
Where Reed upon her margin sees
Sweet Woodburn's cottages and trees,
Some ancient sculptor's art has shown
An outlaw's image on the stone.—P. 194.

Risingham, upon the river Reed, near the beautiful hamlet of Woodburn, is an ancient Roman station, formerly called Habitaneum. Camden says, that in his time the popular account bore that it had been the abode of a deity or giant, called Magon; and appeals, in support of this tradition, as well as to the etymology of Risingham, or Reisenham, which signifies, in German, the habitation of the giants, to two Roman altars taken out of the river, inscribed, *Deo Mogonti Cadenorum*. About half a mile distant from Risingham, upon an eminence covered with scattered birch-trees and fragments of rock, there is cut upon a large rock, in *a'to relievo*, a remarkable figure, called Robin of Risingham, or Robin of Redesdale. It presents a hunter, with his bow raised in one hand, and in the other what seems to be a hare. There is a quiver at the back of the figure, and he is dressed in a long coat, or kirtle, coming down to the knees, and meeting close, with a girdle bound round him. Dr. Horsley, who saw all monuments of antiquity with Roman eyes, inclines to think this figure a Roman archer: and certainly the bow is rather of the ancient size than of that which was so formidable in the hand of the English archers of the middle ages. But the rudeness of the whole figure prevents our founding strongly upon mere inaccuracy of proportion. The popular tradition is that it represents a giant, whose brother resided at Woodburn, and he himself at Risingham. It adds, that they subsisted by hunting, and that one of them, finding the game become too scarce to support them, poisoned his companion, in whose memory the monument was engraven. What strange and tragic circumstance may be concealed under this legend, or whether it is utterly apocryphal, it is now impossible to discover.

The name of Robin of Redesdale was given to one of the Umfravilles, lords of Prudhow, and afterwards to one Hilliard, a friend and follower of the king-making earl of Warwick. This person commanded an army of Northamptonshire and northern men, who seized on and beheaded the earl of Rivers, father to Edward the fourth's queen, and his son, sir John Woodville.—*See Hollinshed, ad annum*, 1469.

10. ———— Do thou revere
The statutes of the buccaneer.—P. 194.

The "statutes of the buccaneers" were in reality more equitable than could have been expected

from the state of society under which they had been formed. They chiefly related, as may readily be conjectured, to the distribution and the inheritance of their plunder.

When the expedition was completed, the fund of prize-money acquired was thrown together, each party taking his oath that he had retained or concealed no part of the common stock. If any one transgressed in this important particular, the punishment was his being set ashore on some desert key or island, to shift for himself as he could. The owners of the vessel had then their share assigned for the expenses of the outfit. These were generally old pirates, settled at Tobago, Jamaica, St. Domingo, or some other French and English settlement. The surgeon's and carpenter's salaries, with the price of provisions and ammunition, were also defrayed. Then followed the compensation due to the maimed and wounded, rated according to the damage they had sustained; as six hundred pieces of eight, or six slaves, for the loss of an arm or leg, and so in proportion.

"After this act of justice and humanity, the remainder of the booty was divided into as many shares as there were buccaneers. The commander could only lay claim to a single share, as the rest: but they complimented him with two or three, in proportion as he had acquitted himself to their satisfaction. When the vessel was not the property of the whole company, the person who had fitted it out, and furnished it with necessary arms and ammunition, was entitled to a third of all the prizes. Favour had never any influence in the division of the booty; for every share was determined by lot. Instances of such rigid justice as this are not easily met with, and they extended even to the dead. Their share was given to the man who was known to be their companion when alive, and therefore their heir. If the person who had been killed had no intimate, his part was sent to his relations, when they were known. If there were no friends nor relations, it was distributed in charity to the poor and to churches, which were to pray for the person in whose name these benefactions were given, the fruits of inhuman but necessary piratical plunders."—*Raynal's History of European Settlements in the East and West Indies, by Justamond*, Lond. 1776, 8vo. iii, p. 41.

NOTES TO CANTO II.

1. ——— the course of Tees.—P. 195.

The view from Barnard castle commands the rich and magnificent valley of Tees. Immediately adjacent to the river, the banks are very thickly wooded; at a little distance they are more open and cultivated; but being interspersed with hedgerows, and with isolated trees of great size and age, they still retain the richness of woodland scenery. The river itself flows in a deep trench of solid rock, chiefly limestone and marble. The finest view of its romantic course is from a handsome modern bridge built over the Tees, by the late Mr. Morritt of Rokeby. In Leland's time the marble quarries seem to have been of some value. "Hard under the cliff by Egleston, is found on eche side of Tese very fair marble, wont to be taken up booth by marbelers of Barnardes castelle and of Egleston, and partly to have been wrought by them, and partly sold unwrought to others."—*Itinerary*, Oxford, 1768, 8vo. p. 88.

2. —Eglistone's gray ruins.—P. 196.

The ruins of this abbey, or priory, for Turner calls it the former and Leland the latter, are beautifully situated upon the angle, formed by a little dell called Thorsgill, at its junction with the Tees. A good part of the religious house is still in some degree habitable, but the church is in ruins. Eglistone was dedicated to St. Mary and St. John the Baptist, and is supposed to have been founded by Ralph de Multon about the end of Henry the second's reign. There were formerly the tombs of the families of Rokebys, Bowes, and Fitzhughs.

3. ——— the mound
Raised by that legion long renowned,
Whose votive shrine asserts their claim,
Of pious, faithful, conquering fame.—P. 197.

Close behind the George inn at Greta-bridge, there is a well-preserved Roman encampment, surrounded with a triple ditch, lying between the river Greta and a brook called the Tutta. The four entrances are easily to be discerned. Very many Roman altars and monuments have been found in the vicinity, most of which are preserved at Rokeby by my friend Mr. Morritt. Among others is a small votive altar, with the inscription LEG. VI. VIC. P. F. F. which has been rendered *Legio. Sexta. Victrix. Pia. Fortis. Fidelis.*

4. ——— Rokeby's turrets high.—P. 197.

This ancient manor long gave name to a family by whom it is said to have been possessed from the conquest downward, and who are at different times distinguished in history. It was the baron of Rokeby who finally defeated the insurrection of the earl of Northumberland, *tempore Hen. IV*, of which Hollinshed gives the following account:

"The king, advertised hereof, caused a great armie to be assembled, and came forward with the same towards his enemies; but yer the king came to Nottingham, sir Thomas (or, as other copies haue) sir Rafe Rokeshie, shiriff of Yorkeshire, assembled the forces of the countrie to resist the earle and his power; comming to Grimbauthbrigs, beside Knaresborough, there to stop them the passage; but they returning aside got to Weatherbie, and so to Tadcaster, and finally came forward unto Bramham moor, near to Haizelwood, where they chose their ground meet to fight upon. The shiriffe was as readie to giue battell as the erle to receiue it; and so with a standard of St. George spread, set fiercelie vpon the earle, who, vnder a standard of his owne armes, encountered his aduersaries with great manhood. There was a sore incounter and eruell conflict betwixt the parties; but in the end the victorie fell to the shiriffe. The lord Bardolfe was taken, but sore wounded, so that he shortlie after died of the hurts. As for the earle of Northumberland, he was slain outright; so that now the propheey was fulfilled, which gaue an inkling of this his heauy hap long before, namelie,

'Stirps Persitina periet confusa ruina.'

For this earle was the stocke and maine root of all that were left aliue, called by the name of Persie; and of manie more by diuers slaughters dispatched. For whose misfortune the people were not a little sorrie, making report of the gentleman's valiantnesse, renowne, and honour, and applicing vnto him certeine lamentable verses out of Lucaine, saieing,

'Sed nos nec sanguis, nec tantum vulnera nostri
Affecere sensi, quantum gestata per urbem
Ora ducis, quæ transfixo deformia pilo
Vidimus.'

For his head, full of siluer horie haires, being put upon a stake, was openlie carried through London,

and set vpon the bridge of the same citie: in like manner was the lord Bardolfe's."—*Hollinshed's Chronicles*, Lond. 1808, 4to. iii, 45.

The Rokeby, or Rokesby, family continued to be distinguished until the great civil war, when, having embraced the cause of Charles I, they suffered severely by fines and confiscations. The estate then passed from its ancient possessors to the family of the Robinsons, from whom it was purchased by the father of my valued friend, the present proprietor.

5. A stern and lone, yet lovely road,
As e'er the foot of minstrel trode!—P. 197.

What follows is an attempt to describe the romantic glen, or rather ravine, through which the Greta finds a passage between Rokeby and Mortham, the former situated upon the left bank of Greta, the latter on the right bank, about half a mile nearer to its junction with the Tees. The river runs with very great rapidity over a bed of solid rock, broken by many shelving descents, down which the stream dashes with great noise and impetuosity, vindicating its etymology, which has been derived from the Gothic, *Gridan*, to clamour. The banks partake of the same wild and romantic character, being chiefly lofty cliffs of limestone rock, whose gray colour contrasts admirably with the various trees and shrubs which find root among their crevices, as well as with the hue of the ivy, which clings around them in profusion, and hangs down from their projections in long sweeping tendrils. At other points the rocks give place to precipitous banks of earth, bearing large trees intermixed with copse-wood. In one spot the dell, which is elsewhere very narrow, widens for a space to leave room for a dark grove of yew-trees, intermixed here and there with aged pines of uncommon size. Directly opposite to this sombre thicket, the cliffs on the other side of the Greta are tall, white, and fringed with all kinds of deciduous shrubs. The whole scenery of this spot is so much adapted to the ideas of superstition, that it has acquired the name of Blockula, from the place where the Swedish witches were supposed to hold their sabbath. The dell, however, has superstitions of its own growth, for it is supposed to be haunted by a female spectre, called the dobie of Mortham. The cause assigned for her appearance is a lady's having been whilom murdered in the wood, in evidence of which her blood is shown upon the stairs of the old tower of Mortham. But whether she was slain by a jealous husband, or by savage banditti, or by an uncle who coveted her estate, or by a rejected lover, are points upon which the traditions of Rokeby do not enable us to decide.

6. What gales are sold on Lapland's shore.—P. 198.

"Also I shall show very briefly what force conjurers and witches have in constraining the elements enchanted by them or others, that they may exceed or fall short of their natural order: premising this, that the extream land of North Finland and Lapland was so taught witchcraft formerly in heathenish times, as if they had learned this cursed art from Zoroastres the Persian; though other inhabitants by the sea-coasts are reported to be bewitched with the same madness: for they exercise this devilish art, of all the arts of the world, to admiration; and in this, or other such like mischief, they commonly agree. The Finlanders were wont formerly, amongst their other errors of gentilisme, to sell winds to merchants that were stopped on their coasts by contrary weather; and when they had their price, they knit three magical knots, not, like to the laws of Cassius, bound up with a thong, and they gave them vnto the merchants; observing that rule, that when they unloosed the first they should have a good gale of wind, when the second a stronger wind, but when they untied the third they should have such cruel tempests that they should not be able to look out of the forecastle to avoid the rocks, nor move a foot to pull down the sails, nor stand at the helm to govern the ship: and they made an unhappy trial of the truth of it, who denied that there was any such power in those knots."—*Olaus Magnus's history of the Goths, Swedes, and Vandals*, Lond. 1658, fol. p. 47.

7. How whistle rash bids tempests roar.—P. 198.

That this is a general superstition is well known to all who have been on ship-board, or who have conversed with seamen. The most formidable whistler that I remember to have met with was the apparition of a certain Mrs. Leaky, who, about 1636, resided, we are told, at Mynehead, in Somerset, where her only son drove a considerable trade between that port and Waterford, and was owner of several vessels. This old gentlewoman was of a social disposition, and so acceptable to her friends, that they used to say to her and to each other, it were pity such an excellent good-natured old lady should die; to which she was wont to reply, that whatever pleasure they might find in her company just now, they would not greatly like to see or converse with her after death, which nevertheless she was apt to think might happen. Accordingly, after her death and funeral, she began to appear to various persons by night and by noonday, in her own house, in the town and fields, at sea and upon shore. So far had she departed from her former urbanity, that she is recorded to have kicked a doctor of medicine for his impolite negligence in omitting to hand her over a style. It was also her humour to appear upon the quay, and call for a boat. But especially so soon as any of her son's ships approached the harbour, "this ghost would appear in the same garb and likeness as when she was alive, and, standing at the mainmast, would blow with a whistle, and though it were never so great a calm, yet immediately there would arise a most dreadful storm, that would break, wreck, and drown ship and goods." When she had thus proceeded until her son had neither credit to freight a vessel, nor could have procured men to sail it, she began to attack the persons of his family, and actually strangled their only child in the cradle. The rest of the story, showing how the spectre looked over the shoulder of her daughter-in-law while dressing her hair at a looking-glass; and how Mrs. Leaky the younger took courage to address her; and how the beldam despatched her to an Irish prelate, famous for his crimes and misfortunes, to exhort him to repentance, and to apprize him that otherwise he would be hanged: and how the bishop was satisfied with replying, that if he was born to be hanged, he should not be drowned:—all these, with many more particulars, may be found at the end of one of John Danton's publications, called Athenianism, London, 1710, where the tale is engrossed under the title of the Apparition Evidence.

8. Of Erick's cap and Elmo's light.—P. 198.

"This Ericus, king of Sweden, in his time was

held second to none in the magical art: and he was so familiar with the evil spirits, which he exceedingly adored, that which way soever he turned his cap, the wind would presently blow that way. From this occasion he was called Windy Cap; and many men believed that Regnerus, king of Denmark, by the conduct of this Ericus, who was his nephew, did happily extend his piracy into the most remote parts of the earth, and conquered many countries and fenced cities by his cunning, and at last was his coadjutor; that by the consent of the nobles, he should be chosen king of Sweden, which continued a long time with him very happily, until he died of old age."—*Olaus, ut supra*, p. 45.

9. ————The demon-frigate.—P. 198.

This is an allusion to a well-known nautical superstition concerning a fantastic vessel, called by sailors the Flying Dutchman, and supposed to be seen about the latitude of the Cape of Good Hope. She is distinguished from earthly vessels by bearing a press of sail when all others are unable, from stress of weather, to show an inch of canvass. The cause of her wandering is not altogether certain; but the general account is, that she was originally a vessel loaded with great wealth, on board of which some horrid act of murder and piracy had been committed; that the plague broke out among the wicked crew who had perpetrated the crime, and that they sailed in vain from port to port, offering, as the price of shelter, the whole of their ill-gotten wealth; that they were excluded from every harbour, for fear of the contagion which was devouring them, and that, as a punishment of their crimes, the apparition of the ship still continues to haunt those seas in which the catastrophe took place, and is considered by the mariners as the worst of all possible omens.

My late lamented friend, Dr. John Leyden, has introduced this phenomemon into his Scenes of Infancy, imputing, with poetical ingenuity, the dreadful judgment to the first ship which commenced the slave trade:

"Stout was the ship, from Benin's palmy shore
That first the freight of bartered captives bore;
Bedimmed with blood, the sun with shrinking beams
Beheld her bounding o'er the ocean streams;
But, ere the moon her silver horns had reared,
Amid the crew the speckled plague appeared.
Faint and despairing on their watery bier,
To every friendly shore the sailors steer;
Repelled from port to port, they sue in vain,
And track with slow unsteady sail the main.
Where ne'er the bright and buoyant wave is seen
To streak with wandering foam the sea-weeds green,
Towers the tall mast a lone and leafless tree,
Still self-impelled amid the waveless sea,
Where summer breezes ne'er were heard to sing,
Nor hovering snow-birds spread the downy wing.
Fixed as a rock amid the houndless plain,
The yellow stream pollutes the stagnant main,
Till far through night the funeral flames aspire,
As the red lightning smites the ghastly pyre.
Still doomed by fate on weltering billows rolled,
Along the deep their restless course to hold,
Scenting the storm, the shadowy sailors guide
The prow with sails opposed to wind and tide,
The spectre ship, in livid glimpsing light,
Glares baleful on the shuddering watch at night,
Unblest of God and man!—Till time shall end,
Its view strange horror to the storm shall lend."

10. ————by some desert isle or key.—P. 198.

What contributed much to the security of the buccaneers, about the Windward Islands, was the great number of little islets, called in that country *keys*. These are small sandy patches, appearing just above the surface of the ocean, covered only with a few bushes and weeds, but sometimes affording springs of water, and in general much frequented by turtle. Such little uninhabited spots afford the pirates good harbours, either for refitting or for the purpose of ambush; they were occasionally the hiding-place of their treasure, and often afforded a shelter to themselves. As many of the atrocities which they practised on their prisoners were committed in such spots, there are some of these keys which even now have an indifferent reputation among seamen, and where they are with difficulty prevailed on to remain ashore at night, on account of the visionary terrors incident to places which have been thus contaminated.

11. Before the gate of Mortham stood.—P. 199.

The castle of Mortham, which Leland terms "Mr. Rokesby's place, in *ripa citer*, scant a quarter of a mile from Greta bridge, and not a quarter of a mile beneath into Tees," is a picturesque tower, surrounded by buildings of different ages, now converted into a farm-house and offices. The battlements of the tower itself are singularly elegant, the architect having broken them at regular intervals into different heights; while those at the corners of the tower project into octangular turrets. They are also from space to space covered with stones laid across them, as in modern embrasures, the whole forming an uncommon and beautiful effect. The surrounding buildings are of a less happy form, being pointed into high and steep roofs. A wall, with embrasures, incloses the southern front, where a low portal arch affords an entry to what was the castle court. At some distance is most happily placed, between the stems of two magnificent elms, the monument alluded to in the text. It is said to have been brought from the ruins of Eglistone priory, and, from the armoury with which it is richly carved, appears to have been a tomb of the Fitz-Hughs.

The situation of Mortham is eminently beautiful, occupying a high bank, at the bottom of which the Greta winds out of the dark, narrow, and romantic dell, which the text has attempted to describe, and flows onward through a more open valley to meet the Tees, about a quarter of a mile from the castle. Mortham is surrounded by old trees, happily and widely grouped with Mr. Morritt's new plantations.

12. There dig, and tomb your precious heap,
And bid the dead your treasure keep.—P. 199.

If time did not permit the buccaneers to lavish away their plunder in their usual debaucheries, they were wont to hide it, with many superstitious solemnities, in the desert islands and keys which they frequented, and where much treasure, whose lawless owners perished without reclaiming it, is still supposed to be concealed. The most cruel of mankind are often the most superstitious, and these pirates are said to have had recourse to a horrid ritual in order to secure an unearthly guardian to their treasures. They killed a negro or Spaniard, and buried him with the treasure, believing that his spirit would haunt the spot, and terrify away all intruders. I cannot produce any other authority on which this custom is ascribed to them than that of maritime tradition, which is, however, amply sufficient for the purposes of poetry.

13. The power————————
That unsubdued and lurking lies
To take the felon by surprise.—P. 199.

All who are conversant with the administration of criminal justice must remember many occa-

sions in which malefactors appear to have conducted themselves with a species of infatuation, either by making unnecessary confidences respecting their guilt, or by sudden and involuntary allusions to circumstances by which it could not fail to be exposed. A remarkable instance occurred in the celebrated case of Eugene Aram. A skelcton being found near Knaresborough, was supposed, by the persons who gathered around the spot, to be the remains of one Clarke, who had disappeared some years before, under circumstances leading to a suspicion of his having been murdered. One Houseman, who had mingled in the crowd, suddenly said, while looking at the skeleton, and hearing the opinion which was buzzed around, "That is no more Dan Clarke's bone than it is mine!"—a sentiment expressed so positively, and with such peculiarity of manner, as to lead all who heard him to infer that he must necessarily know where the real body had been interred. Accordingly, being apprehended, he confessed having assisted Eugene Aram to murder Clarke, and to hide his body in saint Robert's cave. It happened to the author himself, while conversing with a person accused of an atrocious crime, for the purpose of rendering him professional assistance upon his trial, to hear the prisoner, after the most solemn and reiterated protestations that he was guiltless, suddenly, and, as it were, involuntarily, in the course of his communications, make such an admission as was altogether incompatible with innocence.

14. ——Brackenbury's dismal tower.—P. 201.

This tower has been already mentioned: it is situated near the north-eastern extremity of the wall which incloses Barnard castle, and is traditionally said to have been the prison. By an odd coincidence it bears a name which we naturally connect with imprisonment, from its being that of sir Robert Brackenbury, lieutenant of the tower of London, under Edward IV and Richard III.

15. Nobles and knights, so proud of late,
Must fine for freedom and estate.
— — — — —
Right heavy shall his ransom be,
Unless that maid compound with thee:—P. 201.

After the battle of Marston moor, the earl of Newcastle retired beyond sea in disgust, and many of his followers laid down their arms, and made the best composition they could with the committees of parliament. Fines were imposed upon them in proportion to their estates and degrees of delinquency, and these fines were often bestowed upon such persons as had deserved well of the commons. In some circumstances it happened that the oppressed cavaliers were fain to form family alliances with some powerful person among the triumphant party. The whole of sir Robert Howard's excellent comedy of the Committee turns upon the plot of Mr. and Mrs. Day to enrich their family, by compelling Arabella, whose estate was under sequestration, to marry their son Abel, as the price by which she was to compound with parliament for delinquency; that is, for attachment to the royal cause.

NOTES TO CANTO III.

1. The Indian, prowling for his prey,
Who hears the settlers track his way.—P. 201.

The patience, abstinence, and ingenuity exerted by the North American Indians, when in pursuit of plunder or vengeance, is the most distinguished feature in their character; and the activity and address which they display in their retreat is equally surprising. Adair, whose absurd hypothesis and turgid style do not affect the general authenticity of his anecdotes, has recorded an instance which seems incredible.

"When the Chickasah nation was engaged in a former war with the Muskohge, one of their young warriors set off against them to revenge the blood of a near relation.—He went through the most unfrequented and thick parts of the woods, as such a dangerous enterprise required, till he arrived opposite to the great and old beloved town of refuge, Koosah, which stands high on the eastern side of a bold river, about 250 yards broad, that runs by the late dangerous Alebahma-fort, down to the black poisoning Mobille, and so into the gulf of Mexico. There he concealed himself under cover of the top of a fallen pine-tree, in view of the ford of the old trading path, where the enemy now and then pass the river in their light poplar canoes. All his war store of provisions consisted in three stands of barbicued venison, till he had an opportunity to revenge blood, and return home. He waited with watchfulness and patience almost three days, when a young man, a woman, and a girl, passed a little wide of him about an hour before sunset. The former he shot down, tomahawked the other two, and scalped each of them in a trice, in full view of the town. By way of bravado, he shaked the scalps before them, sounded the awful death-whoop, and set off along the trading path, trusting to his heels, while a great many of the enemy ran to their arms, and gave chase. Seven miles from thence he entered the great blue ridge of the Apalahche mountains. About an hour before day he had run over seventy miles of that mountainous tract; then, after sleeping two hours in a sitting posture, leaning his back against a tree, he set off again with fresh speed. As he threw away the venison when he found himself pursued by the enemy, he was obliged to support nature with such herbs, roots, and nuts, as his sharp eyes, with a running glance, directed him to snatch up in his course. Though I often have rode that war-path alone, when delay might have proved dangerous, and with as fine and strong horses as any in America, it took me five days to ride from the aforesaid Koosah to this sprightly warrior's place in the Chickasah country, the distance of 300 computed miles; yet he ran it, and got home safe and well at about eleven o'clock of the third day, which was only one day and a half and two nights."—*Adair's History of the American Indians*, Lond. 1775, 4to. p. 395.

2. In Redesdale his youth had heard
Each art her wily dalesmen dared.—P. 201.

"What manner of cattle-stealers they are that inhabit these valleys in the marches of both kingdoms, John Lesley, a Scotchman himself, and bishop of Ross, will inform you. They sally out of their own borders in the night, in troops, through unfrequented by-ways and many intricate windings; all the day-time they refresh themselves and their horses in lurking holes they had pitched upon before, till they arrive in the dark in those places they have a design upon. As soon as they have seized upon the booty, they in like manner return home in the night, through blind ways, and fetching many a compass. The more skilful any captain is to pass through those wild deserts, crooked turnings, and deep precipices in the thickest mists

his reputation is the greater, and he is looked upon as a man of an excellent head. And they are so very cunning that they seldom have their booty taken from them, unless sometimes when, by the help of blood-hounds following them exactly upon the track, they may chance to fall into the hands of their adversaries; when, being taken, they have so much persuasive eloquence, and so many smooth insinuating words at command, that if they do not move their judges, nay, and even their adversaries,(notwithstanding the severity of their natures,) to have mercy, yet they incite them to admiration and compassion."—*Camden's Britannia.*

The inhabitants of the vallies of Tyne and Reed were, in ancient times, so inordinately addicted to these depredations, that in 1564 the incorporated merchant-adventurers of Newcastle made a law that none born in these districts should be admitted apprentice. The inhabitants are stated to be so generally addicted to rapine, that no faith should be reposed in those proceeding from "such lewde and wicked progenitors." This regulation continued to stand unrepealed until 1771. A beggar, in an old play, describes himself as "born in Redesdale, in Northumberland, and come of a wight-riding surname, called the Robsons, good honest men and true, *save a little shifting for their living, God help them;*"—a description which would have applied to most borderers on both sides.

Reidswair, famed for a skirmish to which it gives name, is on the very edge of the Carter-fell, which divides England from Scotland. The Rooken is a place upon Reedwater. Bertram, being described as a native of these dales, where the habits of hostile depredation long survived the union of the crowns, may have been, in some degree, prepared by education for the exercise of a similar trade in the wars of the buccaneers.

3. Hiding his face, lest foemen spy
The sparkle of his swarthy eye.—P. 202.

After one of the recent battles, in which the Irish rebels were defeated, one of the most active leaders was found in a bog, in which he was immersed up to the shoulders, while his head was concealed by an impending ledge of turf. Being detected and seized, notwithstanding his precaution, he became solicitous to know how his retreat had been discovered. "I caught," answered the Sutherland highlander, by whom he was taken, "the sparkle of your eye." Those who are accustomed to mark hares upon their form, usually discover them by the same circumstance.

4. And throatwort with its azure bell.—P. 202.

The CAMPANULA LATIFOLIA, *grand throatwort*, or *Canterbury bells*, grows in profusion upon the beautiful banks of the river Greta, where it divides the manors of Brignal and Scargill, about three miles above Greta-bridge.

5. Here stood a wretch, prepared to change
His soul's redemption for revenge!—P. 202.

It is agreed by all the writers upon magic and witchcraft, that revenge was the most common motive for the pretended compact between Satan and his vassals. The ingenuity of Reginald Scot, has very happily stated how such an opinion came to root itself, not only in the mind of the public and of the judges, but even in that of the poor wretches themselves who were accused of sorcery, and were often firm believers in their own power and their own guilt.

"One sort of such as are said to be witches, are women which be commonly old, lame, blear-eyed, pale, foul, and full of wrinkles; poor, sullen, superstitious, or papists, or such as know no religion; in whose drowsie minds the devil hath gotten a fine seat; so as what mischief, mischance, calamity, or slaughter is brought to pass, they are easily perswaded the same is done by themselves, imprinting in their minds an earnest and constant imagination thereof.——— These go from house to house, and from door to door, for a pot of milk, yest, drink, pottage, or some such relief, without the which they could hardly live; neither obtaining for their services or pains, nor yet by their art, nor yet at the devil's hands (with whom they are said to make a perfect and visible bargain,) either beauty, money, promotion, wealth, pleasure, honour, knowledge, learning, or any other benefit whatsoever.

"It falleth out many time, that neither their necessities nor their expectation is answered or served in those places where they beg or borrow, but rather their lewdness is by their neighbours reproved. And farther, in tract of time, the witch waxeth odious and tedious to her neighbours, and they again are despised and despited of her; so as sometimes she curseth one, and sometimes another, and that from the master of the house, his wife, children, cattle, &c., to the little pig that lieth in the stie. Thus, in process of time, they have all displeased her, and she hath wished evil luck unto them all; perhaps with curses and imprecations made in form. Doubtless (at length) some of her neighbours die or fall sick, or some of their children are visited with diseases that vex them strangely, as apoplexies, epilepsies, convulsions, hot fevers, worms, &c. which, by ignorant parents, are supposed to be the vengeance of witches.———

"The witch, on the other side, expecting her neighbours' mischances, and seeing things sometimes come to pass according to her wishes, curses, and incantations, (for Bodin himself confesses, that not above two in a hundred of their witchings or wishings take effect,) being called before a justice, by due examination of the circumstances, is driven to see her imprecations and desires, and her neighbours' harms and losses to concur, and, as it were, to take effect; and so confesseth that she (as a goddess) hath brought such things to pass. Wherein not only she, but the accuser, and also the justice, are foully deceived and abused, as being, through her confession, and other circumstances, perswaded (to the injury of God's glory) that she hath done, or can do, that which is proper only to God himself." —*Scot's Discovery of Witchcraft*, London, 1655, fol. pp. 4, 5.

6. Of my marauding on the clowns
Of Calverley and Bradford downs.—P. 203.

The troops of the king, when they first took the field, were as well disciplined as could be expected from circumstances. But as the circumstances of Charles became less favourable, and his funds for regularly paying his forces decreased, habits of military license prevailed upon them in greater excess. Lacy the player, who served his master during the civil war, brought out, after the Restoration, a piece called the Old Troop, in which he seems to have commemorated some real incidents which occurred in his military career. The names of the officers of the troop, sufficiently express their habits. We have Flea-flint, Plunder-master-general, captain Ferret-farm, and quarter-master

Burn-drop. The officers of the troop are in league with these worthies, and connive at their plundering the country for a suitable share in the plunder. All this was undoubtedly drawn from the life, which Lacy had an opportunity to study. The moral of the whole is comprehended in a rebuke given to the lieutenant, whose disorders in the country are said to prejudice the king's cause more than his courage in the field could recompense. The piece is by no means void of farcical humour.

7. ———Brignal's woods, and Scargill's, wave
E'en now o'er many a sister cave.—P. 204.

The banks of the Greta, below Rutherford-bridge, abound in seams of a grayish slate, which are wrought in some places to a very great depth under ground, thus forming artificial caverns, which, when the seam has been exhausted, are gradually hidden by the underwood which grows in profusion upon the romantic banks of the river. In times of public confusion, they might be well adapted to the purposes of banditti.

8. When Spain waged warfare with our land.—P. 205.

There was a short war with Spain in 1625-6, which will be found to agree pretty well with the chronology of the poem. But probably Bertram held an opinion very common among the maritime heroes of the age, that "there was no peace beyond the Line." The Spanish *guarda costas* were constantly employed in aggressions upon the trade and settlements of the English and French, and by their own severities gave room for the system of buccaneering, at first adopted in self-defence and retaliation, and afterwards persevered in from habit and a thirst of plunder.

9. ———our comrades' strife.—P. 205.

The laws of the buccaneers, and their successors the pirates, however severe and equitable, were, like other laws, often set aside by the stronger party. Their quarrels about the division of the spoil fill their history, and they as frequently arose out of mere frolic, or the tyrannical humour of their chiefs. An anecdote of Teach (called Blackbeard) shows that their habitual indifference for human life extended to their companions as well as their enemies and captives.

"One night drinking in his cabin with Hands, the pilot, and another man, Blackbeard, without any provocation, privately draws out a small pair of pistols, and cocks them under the table, which being perceived by the man, he withdrew upon deck, leaving Hands, the pilot, and the captain together. When the pistols were ready, he blew out the candles, and cossing his hands, discharged them at his company; Hands the master was shot through the knee, and lamed for life; the other pistol did no execution."—*Johnson's History of Pirates*, Lond. 1724, 8vo. vol. i, p. 88.

Another anecdote of this worthy may be also mentioned. "The hero of whom we are writing was thoroughly accomplished this way, and some of his frolies of wickedness were so extravagant, as if he aimed at making his men believe he was a devil incarnate; for one day being at sea, and a little flushed with drink, 'Come,' says he, 'let us make a hell of our own, and try how long we can bear it.' Accordingly he, with two or three others, went down into the hold, and, closing up all the hatches, filled several pots full of brimstone and other combustible matter, and set it on fire, and so continued till they were almost suffocated, when some of the men cried out for air. At length he opened the hatches, not a little pleased that he held out the longest."—*Ibid.* p. 90.

10. ———my rangers go
Even now to track a milk-white doe.—P. 206.

"Immediately after supper, the huntsman should go to his master's chamber, and if he serve a king, then let him go to the master of the game's chamber, to know in what quarter he determineth to hunt the day following, that he may know his own quarter; that done, he may go to bed, to the end, that he may rise the earlier in the morning, according to the time and season, and according to the place where he must hunt; then, when he is up and ready, let him drinke a good draught, and feteh his hound, to make him breake his fast a little; and let him not forget to fill his bottel with good wine; that done, let him take a little vinegar into the palme of his hand, and put it in the nostrils of his hound, for to make him snuffe, to the end his scent may be the perfecter; then let him go to the wood. ———When the huntsman perceiveth that it is time to begin to beat, let him put his hound before him, and beat the outsides of springs or thickets; and if he find an hart or deer that likes him, let him mark well whether it be fresh or not, which he may know as well by the manner of his hounds drawing, as also by the eye. ———When he hath well considered what manner of hart it may be, and hath marked every thing to judge by, then let him draw till he come to the couert where he is gone to; and let him harbour him if he can, still marking all his tokens, as well by the slot as by the entries, foyles, or such-like. That done, let him plash or brush down small twigges, some aloft and some below, as the art requireth, and therewithall, whilest his hound is hote, let him beat the outsides, and make his ring walkes twice or thrice about the wood."—*The Noble Art of Venerie, or Hunting*, Lond. 1611, 4to. pp. 76, 77.

11. He turned his charger as he spake, &c.—P. 206.

The last verse of this song is taken from the fragment of an old Scottish ballad, of which I only recolleeted two verses, when the first edition of Rokeby was published. Mr. Thomas Sheridan kindly pointed out to me an entire copy of this beautiful song, which seems to express the fortunes of some follower of the Stuart family:

It was a' for our rightful king
That we left fair Scotland's strand,
It was a' for our rightful king
That we e'er saw Irish land.
My dear!
That we e'er saw Irish land.

Now all is done that man can do,
And all is done in vain!
My love! my native land, adieu!
For I must cross the main,
My dear!
For I must cross the main.

He turned him round and right about,
All on the Irish shore,
He gave his bridle-reins a shake,
With, Adieu for evermore,
My dear!
Adieu for evermore.

The soldier frae the war returns,
And the merchant frae the main,
But I hae parted wi' my love,
And ne'er to meet again,
My dear!
And ne'er to meet again.

When day is gone, and night is come,
And a' are boun' to sleep,

I think on them that's far awa
The lee-lang night, and weep,
My dear!
The lee-lang night, and weep.

12. The baron of Ravenswortb.—P. 207.

The ruins of Ravenswarth castle stands in the North Riding of Yorkshire, about three miles from the town of Richmond, and adjoining to the waste called the forest of Arkingarth. It belonged originally to the powerful family of Fitzhugh, from whom it passed to the lords Dacre of the south.

13. ——— Rere-cross on Stanmore.—P. 207.

'This is a fragment of an old cross with its pediment, surrounded by an entrenchment, upon the very summit of the waste ridge of Stanmore, near a small house of entertainment called the spittal. It is called rere-cross, or ree-cross, of which Hollinshed gives us the following explanation:—

"At length a peace was concluded betwixt the two kings vnder these conditions, that Malcome should enjoy that part of Northumberland which lieth betwixt Tweed, Cumberland, and Stainmore, and doo homage to the kinge of England for the same. In the midst of Stainmore there shall be a crosse set up, with the kinge of England's image on the one side, and the kinge of Scotland's on the other, to signifie that one is march to England, and the other to Scotland. This crosse was called the roi-crosse, that is, the crosse of the kinge."—*Hollinshed*, Lond. 1808, 4to. p. 280.

Hollinshed's sole authority seems to have been Boethius. But it is not improbable that his account may be the true one, although the circumstance does not occur in Wintonn's Chronicle. The situation of the cross, and the pains taken to defend it, seem to indicate that it was intended for a landmark of importance.

14. ——— hast thou lodged our deer?—P. 207.

The duty of the ranger, or pricker, was first to lodge, or harbour the deer; *i. e.* to discover his retreat, as described at length in note 10, and then to make his report to his prince, or master:

"Before the king I come report to make,
Then hush and peace for noble Tristrame's sake——
My liege, I went this morning on my quest,
My hound did sticke, and seemed to vent some beast.
I held him short, and drawing after him,
I might behold the hart was feeding trym;
His head was high, and large in each degree,
Well paulmed eke, and seemed full sound to be,
Of colour browne, he beareth eight and tenne,
Of stately height and long he seemed then.
His beam seemed great, in good proportion led,
Well barred and round, well pearled neare his head.
He seemed fayre tweene blacke and berrie brounde,
He seems well fed by all the signes I found.
For when I had well marked him with the eye,
I stept aside, to watch where he would lye.
And when I so had wayted full an houre,
That he might be at layre and in his boure,
I cast about to harbour him full sure;
My hound by sent did me thereof assure——
Then if he ask what slot or view I found,
I say the slot or view was long on ground;
The toes were great, the joynt bones round and short,
The shinne bones large, the dew-claws close in port:
Short ioynted was he, hollow-footed eke,
And hart to hunt as any man can seeke."

The Art of Venerie, ut supra, p. 96.

NOTES TO CANTO IV.

1. When Denmark's raven soared on high,
Triumphant through Northumbrian sky,
Till, hovering near, her fatal croak
Bade Reged's Britons dread the yoke.—P. 207.

About the year of God 866, the Danes, under their celebrated leaders Inguar (more properly Agnar) and Hubba, sons, it is said, of the still more celebrated Regnar Lodbrog, invaded Northumberland, bringing with them the magical standard, so often mentioned in poetry, called *reafen*, or raunfan, from its bearing the figure of a raven:

Wrought by the sisters of the Danish king,
Of furious Ivar in a midnight hour:
While the sick moon, at their enchanted song
Wrapt in pale tempest, labour'd thro' the clouds.
The demons of destruction then, they say,
Were all abroad; and, mixing with the woof
Their baleful power, the sisters ever sung,
"Shake, standard, shake this ruin on our foes."
Thomson and Mallet's Alfred.

The Danes renewed and extended their incursions, and begun to colonize, establishing a kind of capital at York, from which they spread their conquests and incursions in every direction. Stanmore, which divides the mountains of Westmoreland and Cumberland, was probably the boundary of the Danish kingdom in that direction. The district to the west, known in ancient British history by the name of Reged, had never been conquered by the Saxons, and continued to maintain a precarious independence, until it was ceded to Malcolm, king of Scots, by William the Conqueror, probably on account of its similarity in language and manners to the neighbouring British kingdom of Strath Clyde.

Upon the extent and duration of the Danish sovereignty in Northumberland, the curious may consult the various authorities quoted in the *Gesta et Vestigia Danorum extra Daniam*, vol. ii, p. 40. The most powerful of their Northumbrian leaders seems to have been Ivar, called, from the extent of his conquests, *Widfami*, that is, *The Strider*.

2. Where Tees in tumult leaves his source,
Thundering o'er Caldron and High-Force.—P. 207.

The Tees rises about the skirts of Crossfell, and falls over the cataracts named in the text before it leaves the mountains which divide the North Riding from Cumberland. High-force is seventy-five feet in height.

3. Beneath the shade the northmen came,
Fixed on each vale a Runic name.—P. 207.

The heathen Danes have left several traces of their religion in the upper part of Teesdale. Balder-Garth, which derives its name from the unfortunate son of Odin, is a tract of waste land on the very ridge of Stanmore; and a brook, which falls into the Tees near Barnard castle, is named after the same deity. A field upon the banks of the Tees is also termed Woden-Croft, from the supreme deity of the Edda. Thorsgill, of which a description is attempted in Stanza II, is a beautiful little brook and dell, running up behind the ruins of Eglistone Abbey. Thor was the Hercules of the Scandinavian mythology, a dreaded giant-queller, and in that capacity the champion of the gods and the defender of Asgard, the northern Olympus, against the frequent attacks of the inhabitants of Jotunheim. There is an old poem in the Edda of Sæmund, called the song of Thrym, which turns upon the loss and recovery of the mace, or hammer, which was Thor's principal weapon, and on which much of his power seems to have depended. It may be read to great advantage in a version equally spirited and literal, among the Miscellaneous Translations and Poems of the Honourable William Herbert.

4. Who has not heard how brave O'Neale
In English blood imbrued his steel.—P. 208.

The O'Neale here meant, for more than one succeeded to the chieftainship during the reign of Elizabeth, was Hugh, the grandson of Con O' Neale, called Con-Baeco, or the Lame. His father, Matthew O'Kelly, was illegitimate, and, being the son of a blacksmith's wife, was usually called Matthew the Blacksmith. His father, nevertheless, destined his succession to him; and he was created, by Elizabeth, baron of Dungannon. Upon the death of Con-Bacco, this Matthew was slain by his brother. Hugh narrowly escaped the same fate, and was protected by the English. Shane O'Neale, his uncle, called Shane-Dymas, was succeeded by Turlough Lynogh O'Neale; after whose death, Hugh, having assumed the chieftainship, became nearly as formidable to the English as any by whom it had been possessed. He rebelled repeatedly, and as often made submissions, of which it was usually a condition that he should not any longer assume the title of O'Neale; in lieu of which he was created earl of Tyrone. But this condition he never observed longer than until the pressure of superior force was withdrawn. His baffling the gallant earl of Essex in the field, and over-reaching him in a treaty, was the induction to that nobleman's tragedy. Lord Mountjoy succeeded in finally subjugating O'Neale: but it was not till the succession of James, to whom he made personal submission, and was received with civility at court. Yet, according to Morrison, "no respect to him could containe many weomen in those parts, who had lost husbands and children in the Irish warres, from flinging durt and stones at the earle as he passed, and from reuiling him with bitter words; yea, when the earle had been at court, and there obtaining his majesty's direction for his pardon and performance of all conditions promised him by the lord Mountjoy, was about September to returne, hee durst not passe by those parts without direction to the sheriffes, to conuay him with troopes of horse from place to place, till he was safely imbarked and put to sea for Ireland."—*Itinerary*, p. 296.

5. But chief arose his victor pride,
When that brave marshal fought and died.—P. 208.

The chief victory which Tyrone obtained over the English was in a battle fought near Blackwater, while he besieged a fort garrisoned by the English, which commanded the passes into his country.

"The captaine and his few warders did with no less courage suffer hunger, and, having eaten the few horses they had, lived vpon hearbes growing in the ditches and wals, suffering all extremities, till the lord-lieutenant, in the moneth of August, sent sir Henry Bagnal, marshall of Ireland, with the most choice companies of foote and horse troopes of the English army, to victual this fort, and to raise the rebels' siege. When the English entered the place and thicke woods beyond Armagh, on the east side, Tyrone (with all the rebels assembled to him) pricked forward with rage, enuy, and settled rancour against the marshal, assayled the English, and turning his full force against the marshall's person, had the successe to kill him valiantly fighting among the thickest of the rebels. Whereupon the English being dismayed with his death, the rebels obtained a great victory against them. I terme it great, since the English, from their first arriuall in that kingdome, neuer had receiued so great an ouerthrow as this, commonly called the defeat of Blackwater; thirteene valiant captaines and 1500 common souldiers (whereof many were of the old companies which had serued in Britanny vnder generall Norreys) were slain in the field. The yielding of the fort of Blackwater followed this disaster, when the assaulted guard saw no hope of relief; but especially vpon messages sent to captaine Williams, from our broken forces, retired to Armagh, professing that all their safety depended vpon his yielding the fort into the hands of Tyrone, without which danger captain Williams professed that no want or miserie should have indueed him thereunto."—*Fynes Moryson's Itinerary*, London, 1617, fol. part ii. p. 24.

Tyrone is said to have entertained a personal animosity against the knight-marshal, sir Henry Bagnal, whom he accused of detaining the letters which he sent to queen Elizabeth, explanatory of his conduct, and offering terms of submission. The river, called by the English Blackwater, is termed, in Irish, Avon-Duff, which has the same signification. Both names are mentioned by Spenser in his "Marriage of the Thames and the Medway." But I understand that his verses relate not to the Blackwater of Ulster, but to a river of the same name in the south of Ireland:—

Swift Avon-Duff, which of the Englishmen
Is called Black-water————

6. The tanist he to great O'Neale.—P. 208.

"*Eudox.* What is this which you call tanist and tanistry? These be names and terms never heard of nor known to us.

"*Iren.* It is a custome amongst all the Irish, that, presently after the death of one of their chiefe lords or captaines, they doe presently assemble themselves to a place generally appointed and knowne unto them, to choose another in his stead, where they doe nominate and elect, for the most part, not the eldest sonne, nor any of the children of the lord deceased, but the next to him in blood, that is the eldest and worthiest, as commonly the next brother unto him, if he have any, or the next cousin, or so forth, as any is elder in that kindred or sept; and then next to him doe they choose the next of the blood to be tanist, who shall next succeed him in the said captainry, if he live thereunto.

"*Eudox.* Do they not use any ceremony in this election, for all barbarous nations are commonly great observers of ceremonies and superstitious rites?

"*Iren.* They use to place him that shall be their captaine upon a stone, always reserved to that purpose, and placed commonly upon a hill. In some of which I have seen formed and engraven a foot, which they say was the measure of their first captaine's foot; whereupon hee standing, receives an oath to preserve all the auncient former customes of the countrey inviolable, and to deliver up the succession peaceably to his tanist, and then hath a wand delivered unto him by some whose proper office that is; after which, descending from the stone, he turneth himself round, thrice forwards and thrice backwards.

"*Eudox.* But how is the tanist chosen?

"*Iren.* They say he setteth but one foot upon the stone, and receiveth the like oath that the captaine did."—*Spenser's View of the State of Ireland*, apud *Works*, Lond. 1805, 8vo. vol. viii, p. 306.

The tanist, therefore, of O'Neale, was the heir apparent of his power. This kind of succession appears also to have regulated, in very remote times, the succession to the crown of Scotland. It

would have been imprudent, if not impossible, to have asserted a minor's right of succession in those stormy days, when the principles of policy were summed up in my friend Mr. Wordsworth's lines:

——— the good old rule
Sufficeth them; the simple plan,
That they should take who have the power,
And they should keep who can.

7. His plaited hair in elf-locks spread, &c.—P. 208.

There is here an attempt to describe the ancient Irish dress, of which a poet of queen Elizabeth's day has given us the following particulars:

I mervailde in my mynde,
and thereupon did muse,
To see a bride of heavenlie hewe
an ouglie fere to chuse.
This bride it is the soile,
the bridegroom is the karne,
With writhed glibbes, like wicked spirits,
with visage rough and stearne;
With sculles upon their poales,
instead of civill cappes;
With spears in hand, and swordes by sides,
to beare of after clappes;
With jackettes long and large
which shroud simplicitie,
Though spitfull dartes which they do beare
importe iniquitie.
Their shirtes be very strange,
not reaching past the thie;
With pleates on pleates thei pleated are
as thicke as pleates may lye.
Whose sleaves hang trailling doune,
almost unto the shoe;
And with a mantell commonlie
the Irish karne do goe.
Now some amongst the reste
doe use another weede;
A coate, I meane, of strange devise,
which fancie first did breade.
His skirts be very shorte,
with pleates set thick about,
And Irish trouzes moe to put
their strange protactours out.
Derrick's Image of Ireland, apud *Somers' Tracts*, Lond. 1809, 4to. vol. i, p. 585.

Some curious wooden engravings accompany this poem, from which it would seem that the ancient Irish dress was (the bonnet excepted) very similar to that of the Scottish highlanders. The want of a covering on the head was supplied by the mode of plaiting and arranging their hair, which was called the *glibbe*. These glibbes, according to Spenser, were fit masks for a thief, since, when he wished to disguise himself, he could either cut it off entirely, or so pull it over his eyes as to render it very hard to recognize him. This, however, is nothing to the reprobation with which the same poet regards that favourite part of the Irish dress, the mantle.—

"It is a fit house for an outlaw, a meet bed for a rebel, and an apt cloke for a thiefe. First, the outlaw being for his many crimes and villanyes banished from the townes and houses of honest men, and wandering in waste places far from danger of law, maketh his mantle his house, and under it covereth himself from the wrath of heaven, from the offence of the earth, and from the sight of men. When it raineth, it is his penthouse; when it bloweth, it is his tent; when it freezeth, it is his tabernacle. In sommer he can wear it loose, in winter he can wrap it close; at all times he can use it; never heavy, never cumbersome. Likewise for a rebel it is as serviceable: for in his warre that he maketh, (if at least it deserve the name of warre,) when he still flyeth from his foe, and lurketh in the thicke woods and straite passages, waiting for advantages, it is his bed, yea, and almost his household stuff. For the wood is his house against all weathers, and his mantle is his couch to sleep in. Therein he wrappeth himself rounde, and coucheth himselfe strongly against the gnats, which, in that country, doe more annoy the naked rebels while they keep the woods, and doe more sharply wound them, than all their enemy's swords or spears, which can seldom come nigh them: yea, and oftentimes their mantle serveth them when they are neere driven, being wrapt about their left arme, instead of a target, for it is hard to cut through with a sword: besides it is light to beare, light to throw away, and being (as they commonly are) naked, it is to them all in all. Lastly, for a thiefe, it is so handsome as it may seem it was first invented for him, for under it he may cleanly convey any fit pillage that cometh handsomely in his way, and when he goeth abroad in the night in free-booting, it is his best and surest friend: for lying, as they often do, two or three nights together abroad to watch for their booty, with that they can prettily shroud themselves under a bush or a bankside till they may conveniently do their errand; and when all is over, he can in his mantle passe through any town or company, being close hooded over his head, as he useth, from knowledge of any to whom he is indangered. Besides this, he, or any man els that is disposed to mischief or villany, may, under his mantle, goe privily armed without suspicion of any, carry his head-piece, his skean, or pistol, if he please, to be always in readiness." *Spenser's View of the State of Ireland*, apud *Works*, ut supra, viii, 367.

The javelins, or darts, of the Irish, which they threw with great dexterity, appear, from one of the prints already mentioned, to have been about four feet long, with a strong steel head and thick knotted shaft.

8. With wild majestic port and tone,
Like envoy of some barbarous throne.—P. 208.

The Irish chiefs, in their intercourse with the English, and with each other, were wont to assume the language and style of independent royalty. Morrison has preserved a summons from Tyrone to a neighbouring chieftain, which runs in the following terms: —

"O'Neale commendeth him unto you, Morish Fitz Thomas: O'Neale requesteth you, in God's name, to take part with him, and fight for your conscience and right; and in so doing, O'Neale will spend to see you righted in all your affaires, and will help you. And if you come not at O'Neale betwixt this and to-morrow at twelve of the cloke, and take his part, O'Neale is not beholding to you, and will doe to the uttermost of his power to overthrow you if you come not to him at furthest by Satturday noone. From Knocke Dumayne in Calrie, the fourth of February, 1599.

"O'Neale requesteth you to come to speake with him, and doth giue his word that you shall receive no harme, neither in comming nor going from him, whether you be friend or not, and bring with you, to O'Neale, Gerat Fitzgerald.

"Subscribed O'Neale."

Nor did the royalty of O'Neale consist in words alone. Sir John Harrington paid him a visit at the time of his truce with Essex, and after mentioning "his fern table, and fern forms, spread under the stately canopy of heaven," he notices what constitutes the real power of every monarch, the love, namely, and allegiance of his subjects. "His guard, for the most part, were beardless boys without

shirts; who in the frost wade as familiarly through rivers as water-spaniels. With what charm such a master makes them love him, I know not, but if he bid come, they come; if go, they do go; if he say do this, they do it."—*Nugæ Antiquæ*, Lond. 1784, 8vo. vol. i, p. 351.

9. His foster-father was his guide.—P. 209.

There was no tie more sacred among the Irish, than that which connected the foster-father, as well as the nurse herself, with the child they brought up.

"Foster-fathers spend much more time, money, and affection on their foster-children than their own, and in return take from them clothes, money for their several professions, and arms, and even for any vicious purposes; fortunes and cattle, not so much by a claim of right as by extortion; and they will even carry those things off as plunder. All who have been nursed by the same person preserve a greater mutual affection and confidence in each other than if they were natural brothers, whom they will even hate for the sake of these. When chid by their parents, they fly to their foster-fathers, who frequently encourage them to make open war on their parents, train them up to every excess of wickedness, and make them most abandoned miscreants: as, on the other hand, the nurses make the young women, whom they bring up for every excess. If a foster-child is sick, it is incredible how soon the nurses hear of it, however distant, and with what solicitude they attend it by day and night."—*Giraldus Cambrensis*, quoted by Camden, iv, 368.

This custom, like many other Irish usages, prevailed till of late in the Scottish highlands, and was cherished by the chiefs as an easy mode of extending their influence and connection; and even in the lowlands, during the last century, the connection between the nurse and foster-child was seldom dissolved but by the death of one party.

10. Great Nial of the pledges nine.—P. 209.

Neill Naighvallach, or of the nine hostages, is said to have been monarch of all Ireland, during the end of the fourth or beginning of the fifth century. He exercised a predatory warfare on the coasts of England and of Bretagne, or Armorica; and from the latter country brought off the celebrated saint Patrick, a youth of sixteen, among other captives, whom he transported to Ireland. Neal derived his epithet from nine nations, or tribes whom he held under his subjection, and from whom he took hostages. From one of Neal's sons were derived the kinel-eoguin, or race of Tyrone, which afforded monarchs both to Ireland and to Ulster. Neill (according to O'Flaherty's Ogygia) was killed by a poisoned arrow, in one of his descents on the coast of Bretagne.

11. Shane-Dymas wild ————P. 209.

This Shane-Dymas, or John the Wanton, held the title and power of O'Neale in the earlier part of Elizabeth's reign, against whom he rebelled repeatedly.

"This chieftain is handed down to us as the most proud and profligate man on earth. He was immoderately addicted to women and wine. He is said to have had 200 tuns of wine at once in his cellar at Dandram, but usquebaugh was his favourite liquor. He spared neither age nor condition of the fair sex. Altho' so illiterate that he could not write, he was not destitute of address; his understanding was strong, and his courage daring. He had 600 men for his guard, 4000 foot, 1000 horse for the field. He claimed superiority over all the lords of Ulster, and called himself king thereof. When commissioners were sent to treat with him, he said, 'That, tho' the queen were his sovereign lady, he never made peace with her *but at her lodging;* that she had made a wise earl of Macartymore, but that he kept as good a man as he; that he cared not for so mean a title as earl; that his blood and power were better than the best; that his ancestors were kings of Ulster; and that he would give place to none.' His kinsman, the earl of Kildare, having persuaded him of the folly of contending with the crown of England, he resolved to attend the queen, but in a style suited to his princely dignity. He appeared in London with a magnificent train of Irish galloglasses, arrayed in the richest habiliments of their country, their heads bare, their hair flowing on their shoulders, with their long and open sleeves dyed with saffron. Thus dressed, and surcharged with military harness, and armed with battle-axes, they afforded an astonishing spectacle to the citizens, who regarded them as the intruders of some very distant part of the globe. But at court his versatility now prevailed, his title to the sovereignty of Tyrone was pleaded from English laws and Irish institutions, and his allegations were so specious, that the queen dismissed him with presents and assurances of favour. In England this transaction was looked upon as the humiliation of a repenting rebel; in Tyrone it was considered as a treaty of peace between two potentates."—*Camden's Britannia, by Gough*, Lond. 1806, fol. vol. iv, p. 442.

When reduced to extremity by the English, and forsaken by his allies, this Shane-Dymas fled to Clandehoy, then occupied by a colony of Scottish highlanders of the family of Mac-Donell. He was at first courteously received, but by degrees they began to quarrel about the slaughter of some of their friends, whom Shane-Dymas had put to death, and, advancing from words to deeds, fell upon him with their broad-swords, and cut him to pieces. After his death a law was made that none should presume to take the name and title of O'Neale.

12. ———— Geraldine.—P. 209.

The O'Neales were closely allied with this powerful and warlike family, for Henry Owen O'Neale married the daughter of Thomas earl of Kildare, and their son Con-More married his cousin-german, a daughter of Gerald earl of Kildare. This Con-More cursed any of his posterity who should learn the English language, sow corn, or build houses, so as to invite the English to settle in their country. Others ascribe this anathema to his son Con-Bacco. Fearflatha O'Gnive, bard to the O'Neales of Clannaboy, complains in the same spirit of the towers and ramparts with which the strangers had *disfigured* the fair sporting fields of Erin.—See *Walker's Irish Bards*, p. 140.

13. He chose that honoured flag to bear.—P. 210.

Lacy informs us, in the old play already quoted, how the cavalry raised by the country gentlemen for Charles's service were usually officered. "You, cornet, have a name that's proper for all cornets to be called by, for they are all beardless boys in our army. The most part of our horse were raised thus:—The honest country gentleman raises the troop at his own charge: then he gets a low-country lieutenant to fight his troop safely; then he sends for his son from school to be his cornet; and then he puts off his child's coat to put on a buff coat; and this is the constitution of our army."

14. ——— his page, the next degree
In that old time to chivalry.—P. 210.

Originally the order of chivalry embraced three ranks:—1. The page; 2. The squire; 3. The knight; —a gradation which seems to have been imitated in the mystery of free-masonry. But before the reign of Charles I, the custom of serving as a squire had fallen into disuse, though the order of the page was still, to a certain degree, in observance. This state of servitude was so far from inferring any thing degrading, that it was considered as the regular school for acquiring every quality necessary for future distinction. The proper nature, and the decay of the institution, are pointed out by old Ben Jonson, with his own forcible moral colouring. The dialogue occurs between Lovel, "a complete gentleman, a soldier, and a scholar, known to have been page to the old lord Beaufort, and so to have followed him in the French wars, after companion of his studies, and left guardian to his son," and the facetious Good-stock, host of the Light Heart. Lovel had offered to take Good-stock's son for his page, which the latter, in reference to the recent abuse of the establishment, declares as "a desperate course of life:"—

Lovell. Call you that desperate, which by a line
Of institution, from our ancestors
Hath been derived down to us, and received
In a succession, for the noblest way
Of breeding up our youth, in letters, arms,
Fair mien, discourses, civil exercise,
And all the blazon of a gentleman?
Where he can learn to vault, to ride, to fence,
To move his body gracefully; to speak
His language purer; or to tune his mind
Or manners, more to the harmony of nature,
Than in the nurseries of nobility?
Host. Ay, that was when the nursery's self was noble,
And only virtue made it, not the market;
The titles were not vented at the drum,
Or common outery: goodness gave the greatness,
And greatness worship: every house became
An academy of honour; and those parts
We see departed, in the practice, now,
Quite from the institution.
Lovell. Why do you say so,
Or think so enviously? do they not still
Learn there the centaur's skill, the art of Thrace,
To ride? or, Pollux' mystery, to fence?
The Pyrrhic gestures, both to dance and spring
In armour, to be active in the wars?
To study figures, numbers, and proportions,
May yield 'em great in counsels, and the arts
Grave Nestor and the wise Ulysses practised?
To make their English sweet upon their tongue,
As reverend Chaucer says?
Host. Sir, you mistake;
To play sir Pandarus my copy hath it,
And carry messages to madam Cressida;
Instead of backing the brave steed o' mornings,
To court the chambermaid; and for a leap
O' the vaulting horse to ply the vaulting house:
For exercise of arms a bale of dice,
Or two or three packs of cards to show the cheat,
And nimbleness of hand; mistake a cloak
Upon my lord's back, and pawn it; ease his pocket
Of a superfluous watch; or geld a jewel
Of an odd stone or so; twinge two or three buttons
From off my lady's gown: these are the arts
Or seven liberal deadly sciences,
Of pagery, or rather paganism,
As the tides run; to which if he apply him,
He may perhaps take a degree at Tyburn
A year the earlier; come to take a lecture
Upon Aquinas at St. Thomas a Waterings,
And so go forth a laureat in hemp circle!
Ben Jonson's New Inn, act i, scene iii.

NOTES TO CANTO V.

1. ——— Rokeby ———P. 213.

The ancient castle of Rokeby stood exactly upon the site of the present mansion, by which a part of its walls is inclosed. It is surrounded by a profusion of fine wood, and the park in which it stands is adorned by the junction of the Greta and of the Tees. The title of baron Rokeby of Armagh was, in 1777, conferred on the right reverend Richard Robinson, primate of Ireland, descended of the Robinsons, formerly of Rokeby, in Yorkshire.

2. Rokeby's lords of martial fame,
I can count them name by name.—P. 214.

The following brief pedigree of this very ancient and once powerful family, was kindly supplied to the author by Mr. Rokeby of Northamptonshire, descended of the ancient barons of Rokeby:—

Pedigree of the house of Rokeby.

1. Sir Alex. Rokeby, knight, married to sir Hump. Liftle's* daughter.
2. Ralph Rokeby, esq. to Tho. Lumley's daughter.
3. Sir Tho. Rokeby, knt. to Tho. Hubborn's daughter.
4. Sir Ralph Rokeby, knt. to sir Ralph Biggott's daughter.
5. Sir Tho. Rokeby, knt. to sir John de Melsass' daughter, of Bennet-hall in Holderness.
6. Ralph Rokeby, esq. to sir Bryan Stapleton's daughter, of Weighill.
7. Sir Thomas Rokeby, knt. to sir Ralph Ury's daughter.†
8. Ralph Rokeby, esq. to the daughter of Mansfield, heir of Morton.‡
9. Sir Tho. Rokeby, knt. to Stroode's daughter and heir.
10. Sir Ralph Rokeby, knt. to sir Jas. Strangwayes' daughter.
11. Sir Thomas Rokeby, knt. to sir John Hotham's daughter.
12. Ralph Rokeby, esq. to Danby of Yafforth's daughter and heir.§
13. Tho. Rokeby, esq. to Rob. constable's daughter, of Cliff, serjt. at law.
14. Christopher Rokeby, esq. to Lasscells of Brackenburgh's daughter.‖
15. Thomas Rokeby, esq. to the daughter of Thweng.
16. Sir Thomas Rokeby, knt. to sir Ralph Lawson's daughter, of Brough.
17. Frans. Rokeby, esq. to Faucett's daughter, citizen of London.
18. Thos. Rokeby, esq. to the daughter of Wicliffe of Gales.

High sheriffs of Yorkshire.

1337. 11 Edw. 3. Ralph Hastings and Thomas de Rokeby.
1343. 17 Edw. 3. Thos. de Rokeby, pro sept. annis.
1358. 25 Edw. 3. Sir Thomas Rokeby, justiciary of Ireland for six years; died at the castle of Kilka.
1407. 8 Hen. 4. Thomas Rokeby, Miles, defeated and slew the duke of Northumberland at the battle of Bramham moor.
1411. 12 Hen. 4. Thomas Rokeby, Miles.
1486. .....Thos. Rokeby, esq.
1539. .....Robert Holgate, bish. of Landaff, afterwards P. of York, ld. president of the council

* Lisle.
† Temp. Edw. 2di.
‡ Temp. Edw. 3tii.
§ Temp. Henr. 7mi. and from him is the house of Skyers of a fourth brother.
‖ From him is the house of Hotham, and of the second brother that had issue.

for the preservation of peace in the north.

564. 6 Eliz. Tho. Younge, archbishop of Yorke, ld. president.

30 Hen. 8. Tho. Rokeby, L.L.D. one of the council.

Jn. Rokeby, L.L.D. one of the council.

1572. 15 Eliz. Hen. Hastings, earl of Huntingdon, ld. president.

Jo. Rokeby, esq. one of the council.

Jo. Rokeby, L.L.D. ditto.

Ralph Rokeby, esq. one of the secretaries.

1574. 17 Eliz. Jo. Rokeby, precentor of York.

7 Will. 3. Sir J. Rokeby, knt. one of the justices of the king's bench.

The family of De Rokeby came over with the conqueror.

The old motto belonging to the family is *In Bivio Dextra.*

The arms, argent, cherron sable, between three rooks proper.

"There is somewhat more to be found in our family in the Scottish history about the affairs of Dun-Bretton town, but what it is, and in what time, I know not, nor can have convenient leisure to search. But parson Blackwood, the Scottish chaplain to the lord of Shrewsbury, recited to me once a piece of a Scottish song, wherein was mentioned that William Wallis, the great deliverer of the Scots from the English bondage, should, at Dun-Bretton, have been brought up under a Rokeby, captain then of that place: and as he walked on a cliff, should thrust him on a sudden into the sea, and thereby have gotten that hold, which, I think, was about the 33d of Edw. 1, or before. Thus, leaving our ancestors of record, we must also with them leave the Chronicle of Malmesbury Abbey, called Eulogium Historiarum, out of which Mr. Leland reporteth this history, and coppy down unwritten story, the which have yet the testimony of later times, and the fresh memory of men yet alive, for their warrant and creditt, of whom I have learned it, that in king Henry the 7th's reign, one Ralph Rokeby, esq. was owner of Morton, and I guess that this was he that deceived the fryars of Richmond with his felon swine, on which a jargon was made."

The above is a quotation from a manuscript written by Ralph Rokeby; when he lived is uncertain.

To what metrical Scottish tradition parson Blackwood alluded, it would be now in vain to inquire. But in Blind Harry's history of sir William Wallace, we find a legend of one Rukbie, whom he makes keeper of Stirling castle under the English usurpation, and whom Wallace slays with his own hand:

> "In the great press Wallace and Rukbie met,
> With his good sword a stroke upon him set;
> Derfly to death the old Rukbie he drave,
> But his two sons scaped among the lave."

These sons, according to the romantic minstrel, surrendered the castle on conditions, and went back to England, but returned to Scotland in the days of Bruce, when one of them became again keeper of Stirling castle. Immediately after this achievement follows another engagement, between Wallace and those western highlanders who embraced the English interest, at a pass in Glendochart, where many were precipitated into the lake over a precipice. These circumstances may have been confused in the narrative of parson Blackwood, or in the recollection of Mr. Rokeby.

In the old ballad of Chevy Chase, there is mentioned, among the English warriors, "sir Raff the ryche Rugbe," which may apply to sir Ralph Rokeby, the tenth baron in the pedigree. The more modern copy of the ballad runs thus:—

> "Good sir Ralph Raby there was slain,
> Whose prowess did surmount."

This would rather seem to relate to one of the Nevilles of Raby. But as the whole ballad is romantic, accuracy is not to be looked for.

3. ———— the felon sow.—P. 214.

The ancient minstrels had a comic as well as a serious strain of romance, and although the examples of the latter are by far the most numerous, they are, perhaps, the less valuable. The comic romance was a sort of parody upon the usual subjects of minstrel poetry. If the latter described deeds of heroic achievement, and the events of the battle, the tourney, and the chase, the former, as in the tournament of Tottenham, introduced a set of clowns debating in the field, with all the assumed circumstances of chivalry; or, as in the Hunting of the Hare, (see Weber's *Metrical Romances*, vol. iii,) persons of the same description following the chase, with all the grievous mistakes and blunders incident to such unpractised sportsmen. The idea, therefore, of Don Quixote's frenzy, although inimitably embodied and brought out, was not perhaps in the abstract altogether original. One of the very best of these mock romances, and which has no small portion of comic humour, is the Hunting of the Felon Sow of Rokeby by the Friars of Richmond. Ralph Rokeby, who (for the jest's sake apparently) bestowed this intractable animal on the convent of Richmond, seems to have flourished in the time of Henry VII, which, since we know not the date of friar Theobald's wardenship, to which the poem refers us, may indicate that of the composition itself. Morton, the Mortham of the text, is mentioned as being this facetious baron's place of residence; accordingly, Leland notices that "Mr. Rokeby hath a place called Mortham, a little beneth Gretney-bridge, almost on the mouth of Gretney." That no information may be lacking which is in my power to supply, I have to notice, that the mistress Rokeby of the romance, who so charitably refreshed the sow after she had discomfited friar Middleton and his auxiliaries, was, as appears from the pedigree of the Rokeby family, daughter and heir of Danby of Yafforth.

This curious poem was first published in Mr. Whitaker's History of Craven, but from an inaccurate manuscript, not corrected very happily. It was transfered by Mr. Evans to the new edition of his ballads, with some well-judged conjectural improvements. I have been induced to give a more authentic and full, though still an imperfect, edition of this humorous composition, from being furnished with a copy from a manuscript in the possession of Mr. Rokeby, to whom I have acknowledged my obligations in the last note. It has three or four stanzas more than that of Mr. Whitaker, and the language seems, where they differ, to have the more ancient and genuine readings.

The Felon Sow of Rokeby and the Friars of Richmond.

Ye men that will of aunters* winne,
That late within this land hath beene,
Of one I will you tell;
And of a sew† that was sea‡ strang,
Alas! that ever she lived sea lang,
For fell§ folk did she whell.‖

She was mare¶ than other three,
The griseliest beast that ere might bee,
Her head was great and gray;
She was bred in Rokeby wood,
There was few that thither goed,**
That came on live†† away.

Her walk was endlong‡‡ Greta side;
There was no bren§§ that durst her bide,
That was froe‖‖ heaven to hell;
Nor ever man that had that might,
That ever durst come in her sight,
Her force it was so fell.

Ralph of Rokeby with good will,
The fryers of Richmond gave her till,¶¶
Full well to garre*** them fare;
Fryar Middleton by his name,
He was sent to fetch her hame,
That rued him sine††† full sare.

With him took he wight men two,
Peter Dale was one of thoe,
That ever was brim as beare;‡‡‡
And well durst strike with sword and knife,
And fight full manly for his life,
What time as mister ware.§§§

These three men went at God's will,
This wicked sew while they come till,
Liggan‖‖‖ under a tree;
Rugg and rusty was her haire;
She raise her up with a felon fare,¶¶¶
To fight against the three.

She was so grisely for to meete,
She rave the earth up with her feete,
And bark came fro the tree;
When fryar Middleton her saugh,****
Weet ye well he might not laugh,
Full earnestly look't hee.

These men of aunters that was so wight,††††
They bound them bauldly‡‡‡‡ for to fight,
And strike at her full sare;
Untill a kiln they garred her flee,
Would God send them the victory,
They would ask him noa mare.

The sew was in the kiln hole down,
As they were on the balke aboon,§§§§
For‖‖‖‖ hurting of their feet;
They were so saulted¶¶¶¶ with this sew,
That among them was a stalworth stew,
The kilne began to reeke.

Durst noe man neigh her with his hand,
But put a rape***** down with his wand,
And haltered her full meete;
They hurled her forth against her will,
Whiles they came unto a hill
A little fro the streete.†††††

And there she made them such a fray,
If they should live to doomesday,
They tharrow* it ne'er forgett;
She braded† up on every side,
And ran on them gaping full wide,
For nothing would she lett.‡

She gave such brades§ at the band
That Peter Dale had in his hand,
He might not hold his feet;
She chafed them to and fro,
The wight men was never so wo,
Their measure was not so meete.

She bound her boldly to abide;
To Pater Dale she came aside
With many a hideous yell:
She gaped so wide and cried so hee,
The fryar said, "I conjure thee,‖
Thou art a fiend of hell.

"Thou art come hither for some traine,¶
I conjure thee to go againe
Where thou was wont to dwell."
He sayned** him with crosse and ereede,
Took forth a book, began to reade,
In St. John his gospell.

The sew she would not Latin heare,
But rudely rushed at the frear,
That blinked all his blee;††
And she would have taken her hold,
The fryar leaped as Jesus wold,
And bealed‡‡ him with a tree.

She was as brim§§ as any beare,
For all their meete to labour there,‖‖
To them it was no boote:
Upon tress and bushes that by her stood,
She ranged as she was wood,¶¶
And rave them up by roote.

He said, "Alas, that I was frear!
And I shall be rugged*** in sunder here,
Hard is my destinie!
Wist††† my brethren in this houre,
That I was sett in such a stoure,‡‡‡
They would pray for me."

This wicked beast that wrought this wo,
Took that rape from the other two,
And then they fledd all three;
They fledd away by Watling-streete,
They had no succour but their feet,
It was the more pitty.

The feild it was both lost and wonne;§§§
The sew went hame, and that full soone,
To Morton on the Greene;
When Ralph of Rokeby saw the rape,‖‖‖
He wist¶¶¶ that there had been debate,
Whereat the sew had beene.

He bad them stand out of her way,
For she had had a sudden fray,—
"I saw never so keene;
Some new things shall we heare
Of her and Middleton the frear,
Some battell hath there beene."

But all that served him for nought,
Had they not better succour sought,
They were served therefore loe.

---

* Both the MS. and Mr. Whitaker's copy read *ancestors*, evidently a corruption of *aunters*, adventures, as corrected by Mr. Evans.

† Sow, according to provincial pronunciation.

‡ So; Yorkshire dialect. § Fele, many. Sax.

‖ A corruption of *quell*, to kill. ¶ More, greater.

** Went. †† Alive. ‡‡ Along the side of Greta.

§§ Barn, child, man in general. ‖‖ From.

¶¶ To. *** Make. ††† Since.

‡‡‡ Fierce as a bear. Mr. Whitaker's copy reads, perhaps in consequence of mistaking the MS.—"T' other was Bryan of Bear.

§§§ Need were. Mr. Whitaker reads *musters*. ‖‖‖ Lying.

¶¶¶ A fierce countenance or manner. **** Saw.

†††† Wight, brave. The Rokeby MS. reads *incounters*, and Mr. Whitaker, *auncestors*. ‡‡‡‡ Boldly.

§§§§ On the beam above. ‖‖‖‖ To prevent.

¶¶¶¶ Assaulted. ***** Rope.

††††† Watling-street; see the sequel.

---

* Dare. † Rushed. ‡ Leave it. § Pulls.

‖ This line is wanting in Mr. Whitaker's copy, whence it has been conjectured that something is wanting after this stanza, which now there is no occasion to suppose.

¶ Evil device. ** Blessed, Fr. †† Lost his colour.

‡‡ Sheltered himself. §§ Fierce.

‖‖ The MS. reads *to labour weere*. The text seems to mean that all their labour to obtain their intended meat was of no use to them. Mr. Whitaker reads,

She was as brim as any boar,
And gave a grisly hideous roar,
To them it was no boot.

Besides the want of connexion between the last line and the two former, the second has a very modern sound, and the reading of the Rokeby MS. with the slight alteration in the text, is much better.

¶¶ Mad. *** Torn, pulled.

††† Knew. ‡‡‡ Combat, perilous fight.

§§§ This stanza, with the two following, and the fragment of a fourth, are not in Mr. Whitaker's edition.

‖‖‖ The rope about the sow's neck. ¶¶¶ Knew.

Then mistress Rokeby came anon,
And for her brought shee meate full soone,
The sew came her unto.

She gave her meate upon the flower.
— — — — — — —

[*Hiatus valde deflendus.*]

When fryer Middleton came home,
His brethren was full fain ilkone,†
And thanked God of his life;
He told them all unto the end,
How he had foughten with a fiend,
And lived through mickle strife.

"We gave him battell half a day,
And sithen‡ was fain to fly away,
For saving of our life.§
And Pater Dale would never blinn,‖
But as fast as he could ryn,¶
Till he came to his wife."

The warden said, "I am full wo,
That ever you should be torment so,
But wee with you had beene!
Had wee been there your brethren all,
Wee should have garred the warle** fall,
That wrought you all this teyne.††

Fryer Middleton said soon, "Nay,
In faith you would have fled away,
When most mister‡‡ had been;
You will all speake words at hame,
A man will ding§§ you every ilk ane,
And if it be as I weine."

He look't so griesly all that night,
The warden said, "Yon man will fight
If you say aught but good:
Yon guest‖‖ hath grieved him so sare,
Hold your tongues and speak noe mare,
Hee looks as hee were wood."

The warden waged¶¶ on the morne,
Two boldest men that ever were borne,
I weine, or ever shall be:
The one was Gilbert Griffin's son,
Full mickle worship has he wonne,
Both by land and sea.

The other was a bastard son of Spain,
Many a Sarazin hath he slain,
His dint*** hath gart them die.
These two men the battle undertooke
Against the sew, as says the booke,
And sealed security,

That they should boldly bide and fight,
And skomfit her in maine and might,
Or therefore should they die.
The warden sealed to them againe,
And said, "In field if ye be slain,
This condition make I:

"We shall for you pray, sing, and read
To doomesday with hearty speede,
With all our progeny."
Then the letters well was made,
Bands bound with seales brade,†††
As deedes of armes should be.

These men of armes weere soe wight,
With armour and with brandes bright,
They went this sew to see;
She made on them slike a rerd,‡‡‡
That for her they were sare afer'd,
And almost bound to flee.

She came roveing them againe;
That saw the bastard son of Spaine,
He braded out* his brand;
Full spitcously at her he strake,
For all the fence that he could make,
She gat sword out of hand;
And rave in sunder half his shielde,
And bare him backward in the fielde,
He might not her gainstand.

She would have riven his privich geare,
But Gilbert with his sword of werre,
He strake at her full strong,
On her shoulder till she held the sword;
Then was good Gilbert sore afer'd,
When the blade brake in throng.†

Since in his hands he hath her tane,
She tooke him by the shoulder bane,‡
And held her hold full fast,
She strave so stiffly in that stower,§
That thorough all his rich armour
The blood came at the last.

Then Gilbert grieved was sea sare,
That he rave off both hide and haire,
The flesh came fro the bone;
And all with force he felled her there,
And wan her worthily in werre,
And band her hame alone.

And lift her on a horse sea hee,
Into two panyers well made of a tree,
And to Richmond they did hay:‖
When they saw her come,
They sang merrily Te Deum,
The fryers on that day.¶

They thanked God and St. Francis,
As they had won the heast of pris,**
And never a man was slaine:
There did never a man more manly,
Knight Marcus, nor yet sir Gui,
Nor Loth of Louthayne.††

If ye will any more of this,
In the fryers of Richmond 'tis
In parchment good and fine;
And how fryar Middleton that was so kend,‡‡
At Greta-bridge conjured a fiend
In likeness of a swine.

It is well known to many a man,
That fryer Theobald was warden than,
And this fell in his time;
And Christ them bless both farre and neare,
All that for solace list this to heare,
And him that made the rhime.

Ralph Rokeby with full good will,
That fryers of Richmond he gave her till,
This sew to mend their fare:
Fryer Middleton by his name,
Would needs bring the fat sew hame,
That rued him since full sare.

4. The filea of O'Neale was he.—P. 215.

The filea, or ollamh re dan, was the proper bard, or, as the name literally implies, poet. Each chieftain of distinction had one or more in his service, whose office was usually hereditary. The late ingenious Mr. Cooper Walker has assembled a curious collection of particulars concerning this order of men, in his Historical Memoirs of the Irish Bards. There were itinerant bards of less elevated rank, but all were held in the highest veneration. The English, who considered them as chief supporters of the spirit of national independence, were much disposed to proscribe this race of poets, as Edward I is said to have done in Wales. Spenser, while he admits the merit of their wild poetry,

* This line is almost illegible. † Each one.
‡ Since then, after that.
§ The above lines are wanting in Mr. Whitaker's copy.
‖ Cease, stop. ¶ Run. ** Warlock, or wizard.
†† Harm. ‡‡ Need.
§§ Beat. The copy in Mr. Whitaker's History of Craven reads, perhaps better,—

The fiend would ding you down ilk one.

‖‖ "Yon guest" may be yon *gest*, i. e. that adventure; or it may mean yon *ghaist*, or apparition, which in old poems is applied sometimes to what is supernaturally hideous. The printed copy reads,—The beast hath, &c.
¶¶ Hired, a Yorkshire phrase. *** Blow.
††† Broad, large. ‡‡‡ Such like a roar.

* Drew out. † In the combat. ‡ Bone.
§ Meeting, battle. ‖ Hie, hasten.
¶ The MS. reads mistakenly *every* day. ** Price.
†† The father of sir Gawain, in the romance of Arthur and Merlin. The MS. is thus corrupted,—

More loth of Louth Ryme.

‡‡ Well known, or perhaps kind, well disposed.

as "savouring of sweet wit and good invention, and sprinkled with some pretty flowers of their natural device," yet rigorously condemns the whole application of their poetry, as abased to "the gracing of wickedness and vice." The household minstrel was admitted even to the feast of the prince whom he served, and sat at the same table. It was one of the customs of which sir Richard Sewry, to whose charge Richard II committed the instruction of four Irish monarchs in the civilization of the period, found it most difficult to break his royal disciples, though he had also much ado to subject them to other English rules, and particularly to reconcile them to wear breeches. "The kyng, my soueverigne lords entent was, that in maner, countenaunce, and apparell of clothyng, they sholde use according to the maner of Englande, for the kynge thought to make them all four knyghtes: they had a fayre house to lodge in, in Duvelyn, and I was charged to abyde styll with them, and not to departe; and so two or three dayes I suffered them to do as they lyst, and sayde nothyng to them, but folowed their owne appetytes; they wolde sytte at the table, and make countenance nother good nor fayre. Than I thought I shulde cause them to chaunge that maner; they wolde cause their mynstrells, their seruauntes, and varlettes to sytte with them, and to eate in their owne dysseche, and to drinke of their cuppes; and they shewed me that the usage of their countre was good, for they sayd in all thyngs (except their beddes) they were and lyved as comen. So the fourthe day I ordayned other tables to be couered in the hall, after the usage of Englande, and I made these four knyghtes to sytte at the hyghe table, and their mynstrels at another borde, and their seruauntes and varlettes at another byneth them, whereof by semynge they were displeased, and beheld each other, and wolde not eate, and sayde, how I wolde take fro them their good usage, wherein they had been norished. Then I answered them smylyng, to apeace them, that it was not honourable for their estates to do as they dyde before, and that they must leave it, and use the custom of Englande, and that it was the kynge's pleasure they shulde do so, and how he was charged so to order them. When they harde that, they suffred it, bycause they had putte themselfe under the obeysance of the kynge of Englande, and parceuered in the same as long as I was with them; yet they had one use which I knew was well used in their countre, and that was, they dyde were no breches; I caused breches of lynen clothe to be made for them. Whyle I was with them I caused them to leaue many rude thynges, as well in clothyng as in other causes. Moche ado I had at the fyrst to cause them to weare gownes of sylke, furred with myneuere and gray; for before these kynges thought themselfe well apparelled whan they had on a mantell. They rode always without saddles and styropes, and with great payne I made them to ride after our usage." —*Lord Berners' Froissart*, Lond. 1812, 4to. ii, 621.

The influence of these bards upon their patrons, and their admitted title to interfere in matters of the weightiest concern, may be also proved from the behaviour of one of them at an interview between Thomas Fitzgerald, son of the earl of Kildare, then about to renounce the English allegiance, and the lord chancellor Cromer, who made a long and goodly oration to dissuade him from his purpose. The young lord had come to the council "armed and weaponed," and attended by seven score horsemen in their shirts of mail; and we are assured that the chancellor, having set forth his oration "with such a lamentable action as his cheeks were all beblubbered with teares, the horsemen, namelie, such as understood not English, began to diuine what the lord-chancelor meant with all this long circumstance; some of them reporting that he was preaching a sermon, others said that he stood making of some heroicall poetry in the praise of the lord Thomas. And thus as every ideot shot his foolish bolt at the wise chancellor his discourse, who in effect did nought else but drop pretious stones before hogs, one bard de Nelan, an Irish rithmour, and a rotten sheepe to infect a whole flocke, was chatting of Irish verses, as though his toong had run on pattens, in commendation of the lord Thomas, investing him with the title of Silken Thomas, bicause his horsemens jacks were gorgeously imbroidered with silke: and in the end he told him that he lingered there ouer long. Whereat the lord Thomas being quickened,"* as Hollinshed expresses it, bid defiance to the chancellor, threw down contemptuously the sword of office, which, in his father's absence, he held as deputy, and rushed forth to engage in open insurrection.

5. Ah, Clandeboy! thy friendly floor
Slieve-Donard's oak shall light no more.—P. 215.

Clandeboy is a district of Ulster, formerly possessed by the sept of the O'Neales, and Slieve-Donard a romantic mountain in the same province. The clan was ruined after Tyrone's great rebellion, and their places of abode laid desolate. The ancient Irish, wild and uncultivated in other respects, did not yield even to their descendants in practising the most free and extended hospitality, and doubtless the bards mourned the decay of the mansions of their chiefs in strains similar to the verses of the British Llywarch Hen, on a similar occasion, which are affecting, even through the discouraging medium of a literal translation:

Silent-breathing gale, long wilt thou be heard!
There is scarcely another deserving praise,
Since Urien is no more.

Many a dog that scented well the prey, and aërial hawk,
Have been trained on this floor
Before Erlleon became polluted———

This hearth, ah, will it not be covered with nettles!
Whilst its defender lived,
More congenial to it was the foot of the needy petitioner.

This hearth, will it not be covered with green sod!
In the lifetime of Owain and Elphin,
Its ample cauldron boiled the prey taken from the foe.

This hearth, will it not be covered with toad-stools!
Around the viand it prepared, more cheering was
The clattering sword of the fierce dauntless warrior.

This hearth, will it not be overgrown with spreading brambles!
Till now logs of burning wood lay on it,
Accustomed to prepare the gifts of Reged!

This hearth, will it not be covered with thorns!
More congenial on it would have been the mixed groupe
Of Owain's social friends united in harmony.

This hearth, will it not be covered over with the ants!
More adapted to it would have been the bright torches
And harmless festivities!

This hearth, will it not be covered with dock-leaves!
More congenial on its floor would have been
The mead, and the talking of wine-cheered warriors.

* Hollinshed, Lond. 1808, 4to. vol. vi, p. 291.

This hearth, will it not be turned up by the swine!
More congenial to it would have been the clamour of men,
And the circling horns of the banquet.
Heroic Elegies of Llywarch Hen, by Owen.
Lond. 1792, 8vo. p. 41.

The hall of Cynddylan is gloomy this night,
Without fire, without bed—
I must weep awhile, and then he silent!

The hall of Cynddylan is gloomy this night,
Without fire, without candle—
Except God doth, who will endue me with patience?

The hall of Cynddylan is gloomy this night,
Without fire, without being lighted—
Be thou encircled with spreading silence!

The hall of Cynddylan, gloomy seems its roof,
Since the sweet smile of humanity is no more—
Wo to him that saw it, if he neglects to do good!

The hall of Cynddylan, art thou not bereft of thy appearance!
Thy shield is in the grave;
Whilst he lived there was no broken roof!

The hall of Cynddylan is without love this night,
Since he that owned it is no more—
Ah, death! it will be but a short time he will leave me!

The hall of Cynddylan is not easy this night,
On the top of the rock of Hydwyth,
Without its lord, without company, without the circling feasts!

The hall of Cynddylan is gloomy this night,
Without fire, without songs—
Tears afflict the cheeks!

The hall of Cynddylan is gloomy this night,
Without fire, without family—
My overflowing tears gush out!

The hall of Cynddylan pierces me to see it,
Without a covering, without fire—
My general dead, and I alive myself!

The hall of Cynddylan is the seat of chill grief this night,
After the respect I experienced;
Without the men, without the women, who reside there.

The hall of Cynddylan is silent this night,
After losing its master—
The great merciful God, what shall I do?
Ibid. p. 77.

6. ——Marwood-chase and Toller-hill.—P. 215.

Marwood-chase is the old park extending along the Durham side of the Tees, attached to Barnard-castle. Toller-hill is an eminence on the Yorkshire side of the river, commanding a superb view of the ruins.

7. ————Hawthornden.—P. 216.

Drummond of Hawthornden was in the zenith of his reputation as a poet during the civil wars. He died in 1649.

8. M'Curtin's harp.—P. 216.

"M'Curtin, hereditary ollamh of North Munster, and filea to Donough, earl of Thomond, and president of Munster. This nobleman was amongst those who were prevailed upon to join Elizabeth's forces. Soon as it was known that he had basely abandoned the interests of his country, M'Curtin presented an adulatory poem to M'Carthy, chief of South Munster, and of the Eugenian line, who, with O'Neil, O'Donnel, Lacy, and others, were deeply engaged in protecting their violated country. In this poem he dwells with rapture on the courage and patriotism of M'Carthy: but the verse that should (according to an established law of the order of the bards) be introduced in the praise of O'Brien, he turns into severe satire:—'How am I afflicted (says he) that the descendant of the great Brien Boiromh cannot furnish me with a theme worthy the honour and glory of his exalted race!' Lord Thomond hearing this, vowed vengeance on the spirited bard, who fled for refuge to the county of Cork. One day, observing the exasperated nobleman and his equipage at a small distance, he thought it was in vain to fly, and pretended to be suddenly seized with the pangs of death; directing his wife to lament over him, and tell his lordship that the sight of him, by awakening the sense of his ingratitude, had so much affected him that he could not support it; and desired her at the same time to tell his lordship that he entreated, as a dying request, his forgiveness. Soon as lord Thomond arrived, the feigned tale was related to him. The nobleman was moved to compassion, and not only declared that he most heartily forgave him, but, opening his purse, presented the fair mourner with some pieces to inter him. This instance of his lordship's pity and generosity, gave courage to the trembling bard, who, suddenly springing up, recited an extemporaneous ode, in praise of Donough, and re-entering into his service, became once more his favourite."—Walker's *Memoirs of the Irish Bards*, Lond. 1786, 4to. p. 141.

9. The ancient English minstrel's dress.—P. 216.

Among the entertainments presented to Elizabeth at Kenilworth castle, was the introduction of a person designed to represent a travelling minstrel, who entertained her with a solemn story out of the Acts of king Arthur. Of this person's dress and appearance, Mr. Laneham has given us a very accurate account, transferred by bishop Percy to the preliminary dissertation on minstrels, prefixed to his Reliques of Ancient Poetry, vol. i.

10. ————Littlecot-hall.—P. 218.

The tradition from which the ballad is founded was supplied by a friend, whose account I will not do the injustice to abridge, as it contains an admirable picture of an old English hall:

"Littlecot-house stands in a low and lonely situation. On three sides it is surrounded by a park that spreads over the adjoining hill: on the fourth, by meadows which are watered by the river Kennet. Close on one side of the house is a thick grove of lofty trees, along the verge of which runs one of the principal avenues to it through the park. It is an irregular building of great antiquity, and was probably erected about the time of the termination of feudal warfare, when defence came no longer to be an object in a country mansion. Many circumstances, however, in the interior of the house, seem appropriate to feudal times. The hall is very spacious, floored with stones, and lighted by large transom windows, that are clothed with casements. Its walls are hung with old military accoutrements, that have long been left a prey to rust. At one end of the hall is a range of coats of mail and helmets, and there is on every side abundance of old-fashioned pistols and guns, many of them with matchlocks. Immediately below the cornice hangs a row of leathern jerkins, made in the form of a shirt, supposed to have been worn as armour by the vassals. A large oak table, reaching nearly from one end of the room to the other, might have feasted the whole neighbourhood, and an appendage to one end of it made it answer at other times for the old game of shuffleboard. The rest of the furniture is in a suitable style, particularly an arm chair of cumbrous workmanship, constructed of wood, curiously turned, with a high back and triangular seat, said to have been used by Judge Popham in the reign of Elizabeth. The entrance into the hall is at one end by a low door, communicating with a passage that leads from the outer door in the front of

the house to a quadrangle* within; at the other, it opens upon a gloomy staircase, by which you ascend to the first floor, and, passing the doors of some bed-chambers, enter a narrow gallery which extends along the back front of the house from one end to the other of it, and looks upon an old garden. This gallery is hung with portraits, chiefly in the Spanish dresses of the sixteenth century. In one of the bed-chambers, which you pass in going towards the gallery, is a bedstead with blue furniture, which time has now made dingy and threadbare, and in the bottom of one of the bed curtains you are shown a place where a small piece has been cut out and sown in again,—a circumstance which serves to identify the scene of the following story:—

"It was on a dark rainy night in the month of November, that an old midwife sate musing by her cottage fire-side, when on a sudden she was startled by a loud knocking at the door. On opening it she found a horseman, who told her that her assistance was required immediately by a person of rank, and that she should be handsomely rewarded, but that there were reasons for keeping the affair a strict secret, and, therefore, she must submit to be blind-folded, and to be conducted in that condition to the bed-chamber of the lady. With some hesitation the midwife consented; the horseman bound her eyes, and placed her on a pillion behind him. After proceeding in silence for many miles, through rough and dirty lanes, they stopped, and the midwife was led into a house, which from the length of her walk through the apartments, as well as the sounds about her, she discovered to be the seat of wealth and power. When the bandage was removed from her eyes, she found herself in a bed-chamber, in which were the lady on whose account she had been sent for, and a man of a haughty and ferocious aspect. The lady was delivered of a fine boy. Immediately the man commanded the midwife to give him the child, and catching it from her, he hurried across the room, and threw it on the back of the fire, that was blazing in the chimney. The child, however, was strong, and by its struggles rolled itself off upon the hearth, when the ruffian again seized it with fury, and, in spite of the intercession of the midwife, and the more piteous entreaties of the mother, thrust it under the grate, and, raking the live coals upon it, soon put an end to its life. The midwife, after spending some time in affording all the relief in her power to the wretched mother, was told that she must begone. Her former conductor appeared, who again bound her eyes, and conveyed her behind him to her own home; he then paid her handsomely, and departed. The midwife was strongly agitated by the horrors of the preceding night; and she immediately made a deposition of the facts before the magistrate. Two circumstances afforded hopes of detecting the house in which the crime had been committed; one was, that the midwife, as she sate by the bed-side, had, with a view to discover the place, cut out a piece of the bed-curtain, and sown it in again; the other was, that as she had descended the staircase, she had counted the steps. Some suspicions fell upon one Darrell, at that time the proprietor of Littlecot-house and the domain around it. The house was examined, and identified by the midwife, and Darrell was tried at Salisbury for the murder. By corrupting his judge, he escaped the sentence of the law, but broke his neck by a fall from his horse in hunting, in a few months after. The place where this happened is still known by the name of Darrell's stile,—a spot to be dreaded by the peasant whom the shades of evening have overtaken on his way.

"Littlecot-house is two miles from Hungerford, in Berkshire, through which the Bath road passes. The fact occurred in the reign of Elizabeth. All the important circumstances I have given exactly as they are told in the country; some trifles only are added, either to render the whole connected, or to increase the impression."

With this tale of terror the author has combined some circumstances of a similar legend, which was current at Edinburgh, during his childhood.

About the beginning of the eighteenth century, when the large castles of the Scottish nobles, and even the secluded hotels, like those of the French noblesse, which they possessed in Edinburgh, were sometimes the scenes of strange and mysterious transactions, a divine of singular sanctity was called up at midnight, to pray with a person at the point of death. This was no unusual summons; but what followed was alarming. He was put into a sedan-chair, and, after he had been transported to a remote part of the town, the bearers insisted upon his being blind-folded. The request was enforced by a cocked pistol, and submitted to; but in the course of the discussion he conjectured, from the phrases employed by the chairmen, and from some part of their dress, not completely concealed by their cloaks, that they were greatly above the menial station they had assumed. After many turns and windings, the chair was carried up stairs into a lodging, where his eyes were uncovered, and he was introduced into a bed-room, where he found a lady newly delivered of an infant. He was commanded by his attendants to say such prayers by her bedside as were fitting for a person not expected to survive a mortal disorder. He ventured to remonstrate, and observe that her safe delivery warranted better hopes. But he was sternly commanded to obey the orders first given, and with difficulty recollected himself sufficiently to acquit himself of the task imposed on him. He was then again hurried into the chair; but, as they conducted him down stairs, he heard the report of a pistol. He was safely conducted home: a purse of gold was forced upon him: but he was warned, at the same time, that the least allusion to this dark transaction would cost him his life. He betook himself to rest, and, after long and broken musing, fell into a deep sleep. From this he was awakened by his servant, with the dismal news, that a fire of uncommon fury had broken out in the house of *****, near the head of the canon-gate, and that it was totally consumed; with the shocking addition, that the daughter of the proprietor, a young lady, eminent for beauty and accomplishments, had perished in the flames. The clergyman had his suspicions, but to have made them public would have availed nothing. He was timid: the family was of the first distinction; above all, the deed was done, and could not be amended. Time wore away, however, and with it his terrors. He became unhappy at being the solitary depository of this fearful mystery, and mentioned it to some of his brethren, through whom the anecdote acquired a sort of publicity. The divine, however, had been

* I think there is a chapel on one side of it, but am not quite sure.

long dead, and the story in some degree forgotten, when a fire broke out again on the very same spot where the house of **** had formerly stood, and which was now occupied by buildings of an inferior description. When the flames were at their height, the tumult, which usually attends such a scene, was suddenly suspended by an unexpected apparition. A beautiful female, in a night-dress, extremely rich, but at least half a century old, appeared in the very midst of the fire, and uttered these tremendous words in her vernacular idiom: "*Anes* burned; *twice* burned; the *third* time I'll scare you all!" The belief in this story was formerly so strong, that on a fire breaking out, and seeming to approach the fatal spot, there was a good deal of anxiety testified lest the apparition should make good her denunciation.

11. As thick a smoke these hearths have given
At Hallowtide or Christmas even.—P. 219.

Such an exhortation was, in similar circumstances, actually given to his followers by a Welch chieftain:—

"Eomity did continue betweene Howell ap Rys ap Howell Vaughan and the sonnes of John ap Meredith. After the death of Evan ap Robert, Griffith ap Gronw (cozen-german to John ap Meredith's sonnes of Gwynfryn, who had long served in France and had charge there) comeing home to live in the countrey, it happened that a servant of his, comeing to fish in Stymllyn, his fish was taken away, and the fellow beaten by Howell ap Rys his servants, and by his commandment. Griffith ap John ap Gronw took the matter in such dudgeon that he challenged Howell ap Rys to the field, which he refusing, assembling his cosins John ap Meredith's sonnes and his friends together, assaulted Howell in his own house, after the manner he had scene in the French warres, and consumed with fire his barnes and his out-houses. Whilst he was thus assaulting the hall, which Howell ap Rys and many other people kept, being a very strong house, he was shot out of a crevice of the house, through the sight of his beaver into the head, and slayne out-right, being otherwise armed at all points. Notwithstanding his death, the assault of the house was continued with great vehemence, the doores fired with great burthens of straw; besides this, the smoake of the out-houses and barnes not farre distant annoyed greatly the defendants, for that most of them lay under boordes and benches upon the floore, in the hall, the better to avoyd the smoake. During this scene of confusion onely the old man, Howell ap Rys, never stooped, but stood valiantly in the middest of the floore, armed with a gleve in his hand, and called into them, and bid 'them arise like men, for shame, for he had knowne there as greate a smoke in that hall upon Christmas even.' In the end, seeing the house could no longer defend them, being overlayed with a multitude, upon parley betweene them, Howell ap Rys was content to yeald himself prisoner to Morris ap John ap Meredith, John ap Meredith's eldest sonne, soe as he would swear unto him to bring him safe to Carnarvon castle, to abide the triall of the law for the death of Graff ap John ap Gronw, who was cosen-german removed to the said Howell ap Rys, and of the very same house he was of. Which Morris ap John ap Meredith undertaking, did put a guard about the said Howell of his trustiest friends and servants, who kept and defended him from the rage of his kindred, and especially of Owen ap John ap Meredith, his brother, who was very eager against him. They passed by leisure thence like a campe to Carnarvon: the whole countrie being assembled, Howell his friends posted a horseback from one place or other by the way, who brought word that he was come thither safe, for they were in great fear lest he should be murthered, and that Morris ap John ap Meredith could not be able to defend him, neither durst any of Howell's friends be there, for fear of the kindred. In the end, being delivered by Morris ap John ap Meredith to the constable of Carnarvon castle, and there kept safely in ward until the assises, it fell out by law that the burning of Howell's houses, and assaulting him in his owne house, was a more haynous offence in Morris ap John ap Meredith and the rest, than the death of Graff ap John ap Gronw in Howell, who did it in his own defence; whereupon Morris ap John ap Meredith, with thirty-five more, were indicted of felony, as appeareth by the copie of the indictment, which I had from the records."—*Sir John Wynne's History of the Gwydir Family*, Lond. 1770, 8vo. p. 116.

NOTES TO CANTO VI.

1. O'er Hexham's altar hung my glove.—P. 224.

This custom among the Redesdale and Tynedale borderers is mentioned in the interesting Life of Bernard Gilpin, where some account is given of these wild districts, which it was the custom of that excellent man regularly to visit.

"This custom (of duels) still prevailed on the borders, where Saxon barbarism held its latest possession. These wild Northumbrians indeed went beyond the ferocity of their ancestors. They were not content with a duel; each contending party used to muster what adherents he could, and commence a kind of petty war. So that a private grudge would often occasion much bloodshed.

"It happened that a quarrel of this kind was on foot when Mr. Gilpin was at Rothbury, in those parts. During the two or three first days of his preaching, the contending parties observed some decorum, and never appeared at church together. At length, however, they met. One party had been early at church, and just as Mr. Gilpin began his sermon the other entered. They stood not long silent: inflamed at the sight of each other, they began to clash their weapons, for they were all armed with javelins and swords, and mutually approach. Awed, however, by the sacredness of the place, the tumult in some degree ceased. Mr. Gilpin proceeded: when again the combatants began to brandish their weapons, and draw towards each other. As a fray seemed near, Mr. Gilpin stepped from the pulpit, went between them, and addressed the leaders, put an end to the quarrel for the present, but could not effect an entire reconciliation. They promised him, however, that till the sermon was over they would make no more disturbance. He then went again into the pulpit, and spent the rest of the time in endeavouring to make them ashamed of what they had done. His behaviour and discourse affected them so much, that, at his farther entreaty, they promised to forbear all acts of hostility while he continued in the country. And so much respected was he among them, that whoever was in fear of his enemy used to resort where Mr. Gilpin was, esteeming his presence the best protection.

"One Sunday morning, coming to a church in those parts before the people were assembled, he

observed a glove hanging up, and was informed by the sexton that it was meant as a challenge to any one who should take it down. Mr. Gilpin ordered the sexton to reach it him: but upon his utterly refusing to touch it, he took it down himself, and put it in his breast. When the people were assembled, he went into the pulpit, and, before he concluded his sermon, took occasion to rebuke them severely for these inhuman challenges. 'I hear,' saith he, 'that one among you hath hanged up a glove, even in this sacred place, threatening to fight any one who taketh it down: see, I have taken it down;' and pulling out the glove, he held it up to the congregation, and then showed them how unsuitable such savage practices were to the profession of christianity, using such persuasives to mutual love as he thought would most affect them."—*Life of Bernard Gilpin*, Lond. 1753, 8vo. p. 177.

2. A horseman armed, at headlong speed.—P. 227.

This and what follows is taken from a real achievement of major Robert Philipson, called, from his desperate and adventurous courage, Robin the Devil; which, as being very inaccurately noticed in this note upon the first edition, shall be now given in a more authentic form. The chief place of his retreat was not Lord's Island in Derwentwater, but Curwen's Island in the lake of Windermere.—

"This island formerly belonged to the Philipsons, a family of note in Westmoreland. During the civil wars, two of them, an elder and a younger brother, served the king. The former, who was the proprietor of it, commanded a regiment; the latter was a major.

"The major, whose name was Robert, was a man of great spirit and enterprize; and for his many feats of personal bravery had obtained, among the Oliverians of those parts, the appellation of Robin the Devil.

"After the war had subsided, and the direful effects of public opposition had ceased, revenge and malice long kept alive the animosity of individuals. Colonel Briggs, a steady friend to usurpation, resided at this time at Kendal, and, under the double character of a leading magistrate (for he was a justice of peace) and an active commander, held the country in awe. This person, having heard that major Philipson was at his brother's house on the island in Windermere, resolved, if possible, to seize and punish a man who had made himself so particularly obnoxious. How it was conducted, my* authority does not inform us—whether he got together the navigation of the lake, and blockaded the place by sea, or whether he landed and carried on his approaches in form. Neither do we learn the strength of the garrison within, nor of the works without. All we learn is, that major Philipson endured a siege of eight months with great gallantry, till his brother, the colonel, raised a party and relieved him.

"It was now the major's turn to make reprisals. He put himself, therefore, at the head of a little troop of horse, and rode to Kendal. Here, being informed that colonel Briggs was at prayers, (for it was on a Sunday morning,) he stationed his men properly in the avenues, and himself, armed, rode directly into the church. It probably was not a regular church, but some large place of meeting. It is said he intended to seize the colonel and carry him off; but as this seems to have been totally impracticable, it is rather probable that his intention was to kill him on the spot, and in the midst of the confusion to escape. Whatever his intention was, it was frustrated, for Briggs happened to be elsewhere.

"The congregation, as might be expected, was thrown into great confusion on seeing an armed man on horseback make his appearance among them; and the major, taking advantage of their astonishment, turned his horse round, and rode quietly out. But having given an alarm, he was presently assaulted as he left the assembly, and being seized, his girths were cut, and he was unhorsed.

"At this instant his party made a furious attack on the assailants, and the major killed with his own hand the man who had seized him, clapped the saddle, ungirthed as it was, upon his horse, and vaulting into it, rode full speed through the streets of Kendal, calling his men to follow him; and with his whole party made a safe retreat to his asylum in the lake. The action marked the man. Many knew him: and they who did not, knew as well from the exploit that it could be nobody but Robin the Devil."

The Lord of the Isles:

A POEM.

ADVERTISEMENT.

The scene of this poem lies, at first, in the castle of Artornish, on the coast of Argyleshire; and afterwards in the islands of Skye and Arran, and upon the coast of Ayrshire. Finally, it is laid near Stirling. The story opens in the spring of the year 1307, when Bruce, who had been driven out of Scotland by the English, and the barons who adhered to that foreign interest, returned from the Island of Rachrin on the coast of Ireland, again to assert his claims to the Scottish crown. Many of the personages and incidents introduced are of historical celebrity. The authorities used are chiefly those of the venerable lord Hailes, as well entitled to be called the restorer of Scottish history, as Bruce the restorer of Scottish monarchy; and of archdeacon Barbour, a correct edition of whose Metrical History of Robert Bruce will soon, I trust, appear under the care of my learned friend, the Rev. Dr. Jamieson.†

Abbotsford, 10th December, 1814.

THE LORD OF THE ISLES.

CANTO I.

AUTUMN departs—but still his mantle's fold
Rests on the groves of noble Somerville,
Beneath a shroud of russet dropped with gold,
Tweed and his tributaries mingle still;
Hoarser the wind, and deeper sounds the rill
Yet lingering notes of Sylvan music swell,

* Dr. Burn's History of Westmoreland.
† Now published.

The deep-toned cushat, and the redbreast shrill;
And yet some tints of summer splendour tell
When the broad sun sinks down on Ettrick's western fell.

Autumn departs—from Gala's fields no more
Come rural sounds our kindred banks to cheer;
Blent with the stream, and gale that wafts it o'er,
No more the distant reaper's mirth we hear.
The last blith shout hath died upon our ear,
And harvest-home hath hushed the clanging wain,
On the waste hill no forms of life appear,
Save where, sad laggard of the autumnal train,
Some age-struck wanderer gleans few ears of scattered grain.

Deem'st thou these saddened scenes have pleasure still?
Lovest thou through autumn's fading realms to stray,
To see the heath-flower withered on the hill,
To listen to the wood's expiring lay,
To note the red leaf shivering on the spray,
To mark the last bright tints the mountain stain,
On the waste fields to trace the gleaner's way,
And moralize on moral joy and pain?—
O! if such scenes thou lovest, scorn not the minstrel strain!

No! do not scorn, although its hoarser note
Scarce with the cushat's homely song can vie,
Though faint its beauties as the tints remote
That gleam through mist in autumn's evening sky,
And few as leaves that tremble, sear and dry,
When wild November hath his bugle wound;
Nor mock my toil—a lonely gleaner I,
Through fields time-wasted, on sad inquest bound,
Where happier bards of yore have richer harvest found.

So shalt thou list, and haply not unmoved,
To a wild tale of Albyn's warrior day;
In distant lands, by the rough west reproved,
Still live some reliques of the ancient lay.
For, when on Coolin's hills the lights decay,
With such the seer of Skye the eve beguiles;
'Tis known amid the pathless wastes of Reay,
In Harries known, and in Iona's piles,
Where rest from mortal coil the mighty of the Isles.

I.

"Wake, maid of Lorn!" the minstrels sung.
Thy rugged halls, Artornish! rung,[1]
And the dark seas, thy towers that lave,
Heaved on the beach a softer wave,
As mid the tuneful choir to keep
The diapason of the deep.
Lulled were the winds on Inninmore,
And green Loch-Alline's woodland shore,
As if wild woods and waves had pleasure
In listing to the lovely measure.
And ne'er to symphony more sweet
Gave mountain echoes answer meet,
Since, met from mainland and from isle,
Ross, Arran, Ilay, and Argyle,
Each minstrel's tributary lay
Paid homage to the festal day.
Dull and dishonoured were the bard,
Worthless of guerdon and regard,
Deaf to the hope of minstrel fame,
Or lady's smiles, his noblest aim,
Who on that morn's resistless call
Was silent in Artornish hall.

II.

"Wake, maid of Lorn!" 'twas thus they sung,
And yet more proud the descant rung,
"Wake, maid of Lorn! high right is ours,
To charm dull sleep from beauty's bowers;
Earth, ocean, air, have nought so shy
But owns the power of minstrelsy.
In Lettermore the timid deer
Will pause, the harp's wild chime to hear;
Rude Heiskar's seal through surges dark
Will long pursue the minstrel's bark;[2]
To list his notes, the eagle proud
Will poise him on Ben Cailliach's cloud;
Then let not maiden's ear disdain
The summons of the minstrel train,
But, while our harps wild music make,
Edith of Lorn, awake, awake!

III.

"O wake, while dawn, with dewy shine,
Wakes nature's charms to vie with thine!
She bids the mottled thrush rejoice
To mate thy melody of voice;
The dew that on the violet lies
Mocks the dark lustre of thine eyes;
But, Edith, wake, and all we see
Of sweet and fair shall yield to thee!"—
"She comes not yet," gray Ferrand cried;
"Brethren, let softer spell be tried,
Those notes prolonged, that soothing theme,
Which best may mix with beauty's dream,
And whisper, with their silvery tone,
The hope she loves, yet fears to own."—
He spoke, and on the harp-strings died
The strains of flattery and of pride;
More soft, more low, more tender fell
The lay of love he bade them tell.

IV.

"Wake, maid of Lorn! the moments fly,
Which yet that maiden-name allow;
Wake, maiden, wake! the hour is nigh,
When love shall claim a plighted vow.
By fear, thy bosom's fluttering guest,
By hope, that soon shall fears remove,
We bid thee break the bonds of rest,
And wake thee at the call of love!

"Wake, Edith, wake! in yonder bay
Lies many a galley gayly manned,
We hear the merry pibrochs play,
We see the streamers' silken band.
What chieftain's praise these pibrochs swell,
What crest is on these banners wove,
The harp, the minstrel, dare not tell—
The riddle must be read by love."

V.

Retired her maiden train among,
Edith of Lorn received the song,
But tamed the minstrel's pride had been
That had her cold demeanour seen;
For not upon her cheek awoke
The glow of pride when flattery spoke,
Nor could their tenderest numbers bring
One sigh responsive to the string.
As vainly had her maidens vied
In skill to deck the princely bride.
Her locks, in dark-brown length arrayed,
Cathleen of Ulne, 'twas thine to braid;
Young Eva with meet reverence drew
On the light foot the silken shoe,

While on the uncle's slender round
Those strings of pearl fair Bertha wound,
That, bleached Lochryan's depths within,
Seemed dusky still on Edith's skin.
But Einion, of experience old,
Had weightiest task—the mantle's fold
In many an artful plait she tied,
To show the form it seemed to hide,
Till on the floor descending rolled
Its waves of crimson blent with gold.

VI.

O! lives there now so cold a maid,
Who thus in beauty's pomp arrayed,
In beauty's proudest pitch of power,
And conquest won—the bridal hour—
With every charm that wins the heart,
By nature given, enhanced by art,
Could yet the fair reflection view,
In the bright mirror pictured true,
And not one dimple on her cheek
A tell-tale consciousness bespeak?—
Lives still such maid?—Fair damsels, say,
For further vouches not my lay,
Save that such lived in Britain's isle,
When Lorn's bright Edith scorned to smile.

VII.

But Morag, to whose fostering care
Proud Lorn had given his daughter fair,
Morag, who saw a mother's aid
By all a daughter's love repaid,
(Strict was that bond—most kind of all—
Inviolate in highland hall—)
Gray Morag sate a space apart
In Edith's eyes to read her heart.
In vain the attendants' fond appeal
To Morag's skill, to Morag's zeal;
She marked her child receive their care,
Cold as the image sculptured fair,
(Form of some sainted patroness,)
Which cloistered maids combine to dress;
She marked—and knew her nursling's heart
In the vain pomp took little part.
Wistful a while she gazed—then pressed
The maiden to her anxious breast
In finished loveliness—and led
To where a turret's airy head,
Slender and steep, and battled round,
O'erlooked, dark Mull! thy mighty sound,[3]
Where thwarting tides, with mingled roar,
Part thy swarth hills from Morven's shore.

VIII.

"Daughter," she said, "these seas behold,
Round twice an hundred islands rolled,
From Hirt, that hears their northern roar,
To the green Ilay's fertile shore;[4]
Or mainland turn, where many a tower
Owns thy bold brother's feudal power,
Each on its own dark cape reclined,
And listening to its own wild wind,
From where Mingarry, sternly placed,
O'erawes the woodland and the waste,[5]
To where Dunstaffnage hears the raging
Of Connal with his rocks engaging.
Think'st thou, amid this ample round,
A single brow but thine has frowned,
To sadden this auspicious morn,
That bids the daughter of high Lorn
Impledge her spousal faith to wed
The heir of mighty Somerled:[6]
Ronald, from many a hero sprung,
The fair, the valiant, and the young,
Lord of the Isles,[7] whose lofty name
A thousand bards have given to fame,
The mate of monarchs, and allied
On equal terms with England's pride.—
From chieftain's tower to boudsman's cot,
Who hears the tale, and triumphs not?
The damsel dons her best attire,
The shepherd lights his beltane fire,
Joy, joy! each warder's horn hath sung,
Joy, joy! each matin bell hath rung;
The holy priest says grateful mass,
Loud shouts each hardy galla-glass,
No mountain den holds outcast boor,
Of heart so dull, of soul so poor,
But he hath flung his task aside,
And claimed this morn for holy-tide;
Yet, empress of this joyful day,
Edith is sad while all are gay."

IX.

Proud Edith's soul came to her eye,
Resentment checked the struggling sigh,
Her hurrying hand indignant dried
The burning tears of injured pride—
"Morag, forbear! or lend thy praise
To swell yon hireling harper's lays;
Make to yon maids thy boast of power,
That they may waste a wondering hour,
Telling of banners proudly borne,
Of pealing bell and bugle-horn,
Or, theme more dear, of robes of price,
Crownlets and gauds of rare device.
But thou, experienced as thou art,
Think'st thou with these to cheat the heart,
That, bound in strong affection's chain,
Looks for return, and looks in vain?
No! sum thine Edith's wretched lot
In these brief words—he loves her not!

X.

"Debate it not—too long I strove
To call his cold observance love,
All blinded by the league that styled
Edith of Lorn,—while, yet a child,
She tripped the heath by Morag's side,—
The brave lord Ronald's destined bride.
Ere yet I saw him, while afar
His broadsword blazed in Scotland's war,
Trained to believe our fates the same,
My bosom throbbed when Ronald's name
Came gracing fame's heroic tale,
Like perfume on the summer gale.
What pilgrim sought our halls, nor told
Of Ronald's deeds in battle bold?
Who touched the harp to heroes' praise,
But his achievements swelled the lays?
E'en Morag—not a tale of fame
Was hers, but closed with Ronald's name.
He came! and all that had been told
Of his high worth seemed poor and cold,
Tame, lifeless, void of energy,
Unjust to Ronald and to me!

XI.

"Since then, what thought had Edith's heart,
And gave not plighted love its part!—
And what requital? cold delay—
Excuse that shunned the spousal day.—
It dawns, and Ronald is not here!—
Hunts he Bentalla's nimble deer,
Or loiters he in secret dell
To bid some lighter love farewell,
And swear, that though he may nat scorn
A daughter of the house of Lorn,[8]

Yet, when these formal rites are o'er,
Again they meet, to part no more?"

XII.

—"Hush, daughter, hush! thy doubts remove,
More nobly think of Ronald's love.
Look, where beneath the castle gray
His fleet unmoor from Aros-bay!
Seest not each galley's topmast bend,
As on the yards the sails ascend?
Hiding the dark blue land they rise,
Like the white clouds on April skies;
The shouting vassals man the oars,
Behind them sink Mull's mountain shores,
Onward their merry course they keep,
Through whistling breeze and foaming deep.
And mark the headmost, seaward cast,
Stoop to the freshening gale her mast,
As if she veiled its bannered pride,
To greet afar her prince's bride!
Thy Ronald comes, and while in speed
His galley mates the flying steed,
He chides her sloth!"—Fair Edith sighed,
Blushed, sadly smiled, and thus replied:—

XIII.

"Sweet thought, but vain!—No, Morag! mark,
Type of his course, yon lonely bark,
That oft hath shifted helm and sail,
To win its way against the gale.
Since peep of morn, my vacant eyes
Have viewed by fits the course she tries;
Now, though the darkening scud comes on,
And dawn's fair promises be gone,
And though the weary crew may see
Our sheltering haven on their lee,
Still closer to the rising wind
They strive her shivering sail to bind,
Still nearer to the shelves' dread verge
At every tack her course they urge,
As if they feared Artornish more
Than adverse winds and breakers' roar."—

XIV.

Sooth spoke the maid.—Amid the tide
The skiff she marked lay tossing sore,
And shifted oft her stooping side,
In weary tack from shore to shore.
Yet on her destined course no more
She gained, of forward way,
Than what a minstrel may compare
To the poor meed which peasants share,
Who toil the live-long day;
And such the risk her pilot braves,
That oft, before she wore,
Her bowsprit kissed the broken waves,
Where in white foam the ocean raves
Upon the shelving shore.
Yet, to their destined purpose true,
Undaunted toiled her hardy crew,
Nor looked where shelter lay,
Nor for Artornish castle drew,
Nor steered for Aros-bay.

XV.

Thus while they strove with wind and seas,
Borne onward by the willing breeze,
Lord Ronald's fleet swept by,
Streamered with silk, and tricked with gold,
Manned with the noble and the bold
Of island chivalry.
Around their prows the ocean roars,
And chafes beneath their thousand oars,
Yet bears them on their way;
So chafes the war-horse in his might,
That fieldward bears some valiant knight,
Champs till both bit and boss are white,
But, foaming, must obey.
On each gay deck they might behold
Lances of steel and crests of gold,
And hauberks with their burnished fold,
That shimmered fair and free;
And each proud galley, as she passed,
To the wild cadence of the blast
Gave wilder minstrelsy.
Full many a shrill triumphant note
Saline and Scallastle bade float
Their misty shores around;
And Morven's echoes answered well,
And Duart heard the distant swell
Come down the darksome sound.

XVI.

So bore they on with mirth and pride,
And if that labouring bark they spied,
'Twas with such idle eye
As nobles cast on lowly boor,
When, toiling in his task obscure,
They pass him careless by.
Let them sweep on with heedless eyes!
But, had they known what mighty prize
In that frail vessel lay,
The famished wolf, that prowls the wold,
Had scatheless passed the unguarded fold,
Ere, drifting by these galleys bold,
Unchallenged were her way!
And thou, lord Ronald, sweep thou on,
With mirth and pride and minstrel tone!
But had'st thou known who sailed so nigh,
Far other glance were in thine eye!
Far other flush were on thy brow,
That, shaded by the bonnet, now
Assumes but ill the blithsome cheer
Of bridegroom when the bride is near.

XVII.

Yes, sweep they on!—We will not leave,
For them that triumph, those who grieve.
With that armada gay
Be laughter loud and jocund shout,
And bards to cheer the wassail rout,
With tale, romance, and lay;
And of wild mirth each clamorous art,
Which, if it cannot cheer the heart,
May stupify and stun its smart,
For one loud busy day.
Yes, sweep they on!—But with that skiff
Abides the minstrel tale,
Where there was dread of surge and cliff,
Labour that strained each sinew stiff,
And one sad maiden's wail.

XVIII.

All day with fruitless strife they toiled,
With eve the ebbing currents boiled
More fierce from streight and lake;
And midway through the channel met
Conflicting tides that foam and fret,
And high their mingled billows jet,
As spears, that, in the battle set,
Spring upward as they break.
Then too the lights of eve were past,
And louder sung the western blast
On rocks of Inninmore;
Rent was the sail, and strained the mast,
And many a leak was gaping fast,
And the pale steersman stood aghast,
And gave the conflict o'er.

XIX.

'Twas then that one, whose lofty look
Nor labour dulled, nor terror shook,
Thus to the leader spoke:
"Brother, how hopest thou to abide
The fury of this wildered tide,
Or how avoid the rock's rude side,
Until the day has broke?
Did'st thou not mark the vessel reel,
With quivering planks and groaning keel,
At the last billow's shock?
Yet how of better counsel tell,
Though here thou seest poor Isabel
Half dead with want and fear;
For look on sea, or look on land,
Or yon dark sky, on every hand
Despair and death are near.
For her alone I grieve—on me
Danger sits light by land and sea,
I follow where thou wilt;
Either to bide the tempest's lour,
Or wend to yon unfriendly tower,
Or rush amid their naval power,
With war-cry wake their wassail-hour,
And die with hand on hilt."—

XX.

That elder leader's calm reply
In steady voice was given,
"In man's most dark extremity
Oft succour dawns from heaven.
Edward, trim thou the shattered sail,
The helm be mine, and down the gale
Let our free course be driven;
So shall we 'scape the western bay,
The hostile fleet, the unequal fray,
So safely hold our vessel's way,
Beneath the castle wall;
For if a hope of safety rest,
'Tis on the sacred name of guest,
Who seeks for shelter, storm distressed,
Within a chieftain's hall.
If not—it best beseems our worth,
Our name, our right, our lofty birth,
By noble hands to fall."—

XXI.

The helm, to his strong arm consigned,
Gave the reefed sail to meet the wind,
And on her altered way,
Fierce bounding, forward sprung the ship,
Like greyhound starting from the slip,
To seize his flying prey.
Awaked before the rushing prow,
The mimic fires of ocean glow,
Those lightnings of the wave;[9]
Wild sparkles crest the broken tides,
And, flashing round, the vessel's sides
With elvish lustre lave,
While, far behind, their livid light
To the dark billows of the night
A gloomy splendour gave.
It seems as if old ocean shakes
From his dark brow the livid flakes
In envious pageantry,
To match the meteor light that streaks
Grim Hecla's midnight sky.

XXII.

Nor lacked they steadier light to keep
Their course upon the darkened deep:—
Artornish, on her frowning steep,
'Twixt cloud and ocean hung,
Glanced with a thousand lights of glee,
And landward far, and far to sea,
Her festal radiance flung.
By that blith beacon-light they steered,
Whose lustre mingled well
With the pale beam that now appeared,
As the cold moon her head upreared
Above the eastern fell.

XXIII.

Thus guided, on their course they bore,
Until they neared the mainland shore,
When frequent on the hollow blast
Wild shouts of merriment were cast,
And wind and wave and seabird's cry
With wassail sounds in concert vie
Like funeral shrieks with revelry,
Or like the battle-shout
By peasants heard from cliffs on high,
When triumph, rage, and agony,
Madden the fight and rout.
Now nearer yet, through mist and storm,
Dimly arose the castle's form,
And deepened shadow made,
Far lengthened on the main below,
Where, dancing in reflected glow,
An hundred torches played,
Spangling the wave with lights as vain
As pleasures in this vale of pain,
That dazzle as they fade.

XXIV.

Beneath the castle's sheltering lee,
They staid their course in quiet sea.
Hewn in the rock, a passage there
Sought the dark fortress by a stair
So straight, so high, so steep,
With peasant's staff one valiant hand
Might well the dizzy pass have manned,
'Gainst hundreds armed with spear and brand,
And plunged them in the deep.[10]
His bugle then the helmsman wound;
Loud answered every echo round,
From turret, rock, and bay,
The postern's hinges crash and groan,
And soon the warder's cresset shone
On those rude steps of slippery stone,
To light the upward way.
"Thrice welcome, holy sire!" he said;
"Full long the spousal train have staid,
And, vexed at thy delay,
Feared lest, amidst these wildering seas,
The darksome night and freshening breeze
Had driven thy bark astray."—

XXV.

"Warder," the younger stranger said,
"Thine erring guess some mirth had made
In mirthful hour; but nights like these,
When the rough winds wake western seas,
Brook not of glee. We crave some aid
And needful shelter for this maid,
Until the break of day;
For, to ourselves, the deck's rude plank
Is easy as the mossy bank
That's breathed upon by May;
And for our storm-tossed skiff we seek
Short shelter in this leeward creek,
Prompt when the dawn the east shall streak,
Again to bear away."—
Answered the warder, "In what name
Assert ye hospitable claim?
Whence come, or whither bound?
Hath Erin seen your parting sails,
Or come ye on Norweyan gales?

And seek ye England's fertile vales,
Or Scotland's mountain ground?"—
"Warriors—for other title none
For some brief space we list to own,
Bound by a vow—warriors are we:
In strife by land, and storm by sea,
We have been known to fame;
And these brief words have import dear,
When sounded in a noble ear,
To harbour safe, and friendly cheer,
That gives us rightful claim.
Grant us the trivial boon we seek,
And we in other realms will speak
Fair of your courtesy;
Deny—and be your niggard hold
Scorned by the noble and the bold,
Shunned by the pilgrim on the wold,
And wanderer on the lea."—

XXVI.

"Bold stranger, no—'gainst claim like thine,
No bolt revolves by hand of mine,
Though urged in tone that more expressed
A monarch than a suppliant guest.
Be what ye will, Artornish Hall
On this glad eve is free to all.
Though ye had drawn a hostile sword
'Gainst our ally, great England's lord,
Or mail upon your shoulders borne,
To battle with the lord of Lorn,
Or, outlawed, dwelt by greenwood tree
With the fierce knight of Ellerslie,
Or aided e'en the murderous strife,
When Comyn fell beneath the knife
Of that fell homicide the Bruce,
This night had been a term of truce.—
Ho, vassals! give these guests your care,
And show the narrow postern stair."—

XXVII.

To land these two bold brethren leapt,
(The weary crew their vessel kept,)
And, lighted by the torches' flare,
That seaward flung their smoky glare,
The younger knight that maiden bare
Half lifeless up the rock;
On his strong shoulder leaned her head,
And down her long dark tresses shed,
As the wild vine, in tendrils spread,
Droops from the mountain oak.
Him followed close that elder lord,
And in his hand a sheathed sword,
Such as few arms could wield;
But when he bouned him to such task,
Well could it cleave the strongest casque,
And rend the surest shield.

XXVIII.

The raised portcullis arch they pass,
The wicket with its bars of brass,
The entrance long and low,
Flanked at each turn by loop-holes strait,
Where bowmen might in ambush wait,
(If force or fraud should burst the gate,)
To gall an entering foe.
But every jealous post of ward,
Was now defenceless and unbarred,
And all the passage free
To one low-browed and vaulted room,
Where squire and yeoman, page and groom,
Plied their loud revelry.

XXIX.

And "Rest ye here," the warder bade,
"Till to our lord your suit is said.—
And, comrades, gaze not on the maid,
And on these men who ask our aid,
As if ye ne'er had seen
A damsel tired of midnight bark,
Or wanderers of a moulding stark,
And bearing martial mien."—
But not for Eachin's reproof
Would page or vassal stand aloof,
But crowded on to stare,
As men of courtesy untaught,
Till fiery Edward roughly caught,
From one the foremost there,
His chequered plaid, and in its shroud,
To hide her from the vulgar crowd,
Involved his sister fair.
His brother, as the clansman bent
His sullen brow in discontent,
Made brief and stern excuse;—
"Vassal, were thine the cloak of pall
That decks thy lord in bridal hall,
'Twere honoured by her use."—

XXX.

Proud was his tone, but calm; his eye
Had that compelling dignity,
His mien that bearing haught and high,
Which common spirits fear;
Needed nor word nor signal more,
Nod, wink, and laughter, all were o'er:
Upon each other back they bore,
And gazed like startled deer.
But now appeared the seneschal,
Commissioned by his lord to call
The strangers to the baron's hall,
Where feasted fair and free
That Island prince in nuptial tide,
With Edith there his lovely bride,
And her bold brother by her side,
And many a chief, the flower and pride
Of western land and sea.

Here pause we, gentles, for a space;
And, if our tale hath won your grace,
Grant us brief patience, and again
We will renew the minstrel strain.

CANTO II.

I.

Fill the bright goblet, spread the festive board!
Summon the gay, the noble, and the fair!
Through the loud hall in joyous concert poured,
Let mirth and music sound the dirge of care!
But ask thou not if happiness be there,
If the loud laugh disguise convulsive throe,
Or if the brow the heart's true livery wear;
Lift not the festal mask!—enough to know,
No scene of mortal life but teems with mortal wo.

II.

With beakers' clang, with harpers' lay,
With all that olden time deemed gay,
The Island chieftain feasted high;
But there was in his troubled eye
A gloomy fire, and on his brow
Now sudden flushed, and faded now,
Emotions such as draw their birth
From deeper source than festal mirth.
By fits he paused, and harper's strain
And jester's tale went round in vain,
Or fell but on his idle ear
Like distant sounds which dreamers hear.
Then would he rouse him, and employ
Each art to aid the clamorous joy,

And call for pledge and lay,
And, for brief space, of all the crowd,
As he was loudest of the loud,
Seemed gayest of the gay.

III.

Yet nought amiss the bridal throng
Marked in brief mirth, or musing long;
The vacant brow, the unlistening ear,
They gave to thoughts of raptures near,
And his fierce starts of sudden glee,
Seemed bursts of bridegroom's ecstasy.
Nor thus alone misjudged the crowd,
Since lofty Lorn, suspicious, proud,
And jealous of his honoured line,
And that keen knight, De Argentine,[1]
(From England sent on errand high,
The western league more firm to tie,)
Both deemed in Ronald's mood to find
A lover's transport-troubled mind.
But one sad heart, one tearful eye,
Pierced deeper through the mystery,
And watched, with agony and fear,
Her wayward bridegroom's varied cheer.

IV.

She watched—yet feared to meet his glance,
And he shunned her's;—till when by chance,
They met, the point of foeman's lance
Had given a milder pang!
Beneath the intolerable smart
He writhed;—then sternly manned his heart
To play his hard but destined part,
And from the table sprang.
"Fill me the mighty cup!" he said,
"Erst owned by royal Somerled.[2]
Fill it, till on the studded brim
In burning gold the bubbles swim,
And every gem of varied shine
Glow doubly bright in rosy wine!
To you, brave lord, and brother mine,
Of Lorn, this pledge I drink—
The union of our house with thine,
By this fair bridal-link!"

V.

"Let it pass round!" quoth he of Lorn,
"And in good time—that winded horn
Must of the abbot tell;
The laggard monk is come at last."—
Lord Ronald heard the bugle blast,
And, on the floor at random cast,
The untasted goblet fell.
But when the warder in his ear
Tells other news, his blither cheer
Returns like sun of May,
When through a thunder-cloud it beams;—
Lord of two hundred isles, he seems
As glad of brief delay,
As some poor criminal might feel,
When from the gibbet or the wheel
Respited for a day.

VI.

"Brother of Lorn," with hurried voice
He said, "And you, fair lords, rejoice!
Here, to augment our glee,
Come wandering knights from travel far,
Well proved, they say, in strife of war,
And tempest on the sea.—
Ho! give them at your board such place
As best their presences may grace,
And bid them welcome free!"
With solemn step, and silver wand,
The seneschal the presence scanned
Of these strange guests;[3] and well he knew
How to assign their rank its due;
For, though the costly furs
That erst had decked their caps were torn,
And their gay robes were over-worn,
And soiled their gilded spurs,
Yet such a high commanding grace
Was in their mien and in their face,
As suited best the princely dais,
And royal canopy:
And there he marshalled them their place,
First of that company.

VII.

Then lords and ladies spake aside,
And angry looks the error chide,
That gave to guests unnamed, unknown,
A place so near their prince's throne;
But Owen Erraught said,
"For forty years a seneschal,
To marshal guests in bower and hall
Has been my honoured trade.
Worship and birth to me are known,
By look, by bearing, and by tone,
Not by furred robe or broidered zone;
And 'gainst an oaken bough
I'll gage my silver wand of state,
That these three strangers oft have sate
In higher place than now."—

VIII.

"I, too," the aged Ferrand said,
"Am qualified by minstrel trade
Of rank and place to tell;—
Marked ye the younger stranger's eye,
My mates, how quick, how keen, how high,
How fierce its flashes fell,
Glancing among the noble rout
As if to seek the noblest out,
Because the owner might not brook
On any save his peers to look?
And yet it moves me more,
That steady, calm, majestic brow,
With which the elder chief e'en now
Scanned the gay presence o'er,
Like being of superior kind,
In whose high-toned impartial mind
Degrees of mortal rank and state
Seem objects of indifferent weight.
The lady too—though, closely tied,
The mantle veil both face and eye,
Her motion's grace it could not hide,
Nor could her form's fair symmetry."—

IX.

Suspicious doubt and lordly scorn
Loured on the haughty front of Lorn.
From underneath his brows of pride,
The stranger guests he sternly eyed,
And whispered closely what the ear
Of Argentine alone might hear;
Then questioned, high and brief,
"If, in their voyage, aught they knew
Of the rebellious Scottish crew,
Who to Rath-Erin's shelter drew,
With Carrick's outlawed chief?[4]
And if, their winter's exile o'er,
They harboured still by Ulster's shore,
Or launched their galleys on the main,
To vex their native land again?"

X.

That younger stranger, fierce and high,
At once confronts the chieftain's eye
With look of equal scorn;

"Of rebels have we nought to show;
But if of royal Bruce thou'dst know,
I warn thee he has sworn,
Ere thrice three days shall come and go,
His banner Scottish winds shall blow,
Despite each mean or mighty foe,
From England's every bill and bow,
To Allaster of Lorn."
Kindled the mountain chieftain's ire,
But Ronald quenched the rising fire;
"Brother, it better suits the time
To chase the night with Ferrand's rhyme,
Than wake, 'midst mirth and wine, the jars
That flow from these unhappy wars."—
"Content," said Lorn; and spoke apart
With Ferrand, master of his art,
Then whispered Argentine,—
"The lay I named will carry smart
To these bold strangers' haughty heart,
If right this guess of mine."
He ceased, and it was silence all,
Until the minstrel waked the hall.

XI.

THE BROACH OF LORN.[5]

"Whence the broach of burning gold,
That clasps the chieftain's mantle-fold,
Wrought and chased with rare device,
Studded fair with gems of price,[6]
On the varied tartans beaming,
As, through night's pale rainbow gleaming,
Fainter now, now seen afar,
Fitful shines the northern star?

"Gem, ne'er wrought on highland mountain,
Did the fairy of the fountain,
Or the mermaid of the wave,
Frame thee in some coral cave?
Did in Iceland's darksome mine
Dwarf's swart hands thy metal twine?
Or, mortal-moulded, comest thou here,
From England's love, or France's fear?

XII.

SONG CONTINUED.

"No!—thy splendours nothing tell,
Foreign art or faëry spell.
Moulded thou for monarch's use,
By the over-weening Bruce,
When the royal robe he tied
O'er a heart of wrath and pride;
Thence in triumph wert thou torn,
By the victor hand of Lorn!

"When the gem was won and lost,
Wildly was the war-cry tossed!
Rung aloud Bendourish Fell,
Answered Douchart's sounding dell,
Fled the deer from wild Teyndrum,
When the homicide, o'ercome,
Hardly 'scaped with scathe and scorn,
Left the pledge with conquering Lorn!

XIII.

SONG CONCLUDED.

"Vain was then the Douglas brand,
Vain the Campbell's vaunted hand,[7]
Vain Kirkpatrick's bloody dirk,
Making sure of murder's work[8]
Barendown fled fast away,
Fled the fiery De la Haye,[9]
When this broach, triumphant borne,
Beamed upon the breast of Lorn.

"Farthest fled, its former lord
Left his men to brand and cord,
Bloody brand of highland steel,
English gibbet, axe, and wheel.
Let him fly from coast to coast,
Dogged by Comyn's vengeful ghost,
While his spoils, in triumph worn,
Long shall grace victorious Lorn!"—

XIV.

As glares the tiger on his foes,
Hemmed in by hunters, spears, and bows,
And, ere he bounds upon the ring,
Selects the object of his spring,—
Now on the bard, now on his lord,
So Edward glared and grasped his sword—
But stern his brother spoke,—"Be still!
What! art thou yet so wild of will,
After high deeds and sufferings long,
To chafe thee for a menial's song?—
Well hast thou framed, old man, thy strains,
To praise the hand that pays thy pains;[10]
Yet something might thy song have told
Of Lorn's three vassals, true and bold,
Who rent their lord from Bruce's hold,
As underneath his knee he lay,
And died to save him in the fray.
I've heard the Bruce's cloak and clasp
Was clenched within their dying grasp,
What time a hundred foemen more
Rushed in and back the victor bore,
Long after Lorn had left the strife,
Full glad to 'scape with limb and life.—
Enough of this—and, minstrel, hold,
As minstrel-hire, this chain of gold,
For future lays a fair excuse,
To speak more nobly of the Bruce."—

XV.

"Now, by Columba's shrine, I swear,
And every saint that's buried there,
'Tis he himself!" Lorn sternly cries,
"And for my kinsman's death he dies."
As loudly Ronald calls—"Forbear!
Not in my sight while brand I wear,
O'ermatched by odds, shall warrior fall,
Or blood of stranger stain my hall!
This ancient fortress of my race
Shall be misfortune's resting-place,
Shelter and shield of the distressed,
No slaughter-house for shipwrecked guest."—
"Talk not to me," fierce Lorn replied,
"Of odds or match!—when Comyn died,
Three daggers clashed within his side!
Talk not to me of sheltering hall,
The church of God saw Comyn fall!
On God's own altar streamed his blood,
While o'er my prostrate kinsman stood
The ruthless murderer—e'en as now—
With armed hand and scornful brow.—
Up, all who love me! blow on blow!
And lay the outlawed felons low!"—

XVI.

Then up sprung many a mainland lord,
Obedient to their chieftain's word.
Barcaldine's arm is high in air,
And Kinloch-Alline's blade is bare,
Black Murthok's dirk has left its sheath,
And clenched is Dermid's hand of death.
Their muttered threats of vengeance swell
Into a wild and warlike yell;
Onward they press with weapons high,
The affrighted females shriek and fly,
And, Scotland, then thy brightest ray
Had darkened ere its noon of day,

But every chief of birth and fame,
That from the Isles of Ocean came,
At Ronald's side that hour withstood
Fierce Lorn's relentless thirst for blood.

XVII.

Brave Torquil from Dunvegan high,
Lord of the misty hills of Skye,
M'Niel, wild Bara's ancient thane,
Duart, of bold Clan Gillian's strain,
Fergus, of Canna's castled bay,
M'Duffith, lord of Colonsay,
Soon as they saw the broadswords glance,
With ready weapons rose at once,
More prompt, that many an ancient feud,
Full oft suppressed, full oft renewed,
Glowed 'twixt the chieftains of Argyle,
And many a lord of ocean's isle.
Wild was the scene—each sword was bare,
Back streamed each chieftain's shaggy hair,
In gloomy opposition set,
Eyes, hands, and brandished weapons met;
Blue gleaming o'er the social board,
Flashed to the torches many a sword;
And soon those bridal lights may shine
On purple blood for rosy wine.

XVIII.

While thus for blows and death prepared,
Each harp was up, each weapon bared,
Each foot advanced,—a surly pause
Still reverenced hospitable laws.
All menaced violence, but alike
Reluctant each the first to strike,
(For aye accursed in minstrel line
Is he who brawls 'mid song and wine,)
And, matched in numbers and in might,
Doubtful and desperate seemed the fight.
Thus threat and murmur died away,
Till on the crowded hall there lay
Such silence, as the deadly still,
Ere burst the thunder on the hill.
With blade advanced, each chieftain bold
Showed like the sworder's form of old,
As wanting still the torch of life,
To wake the marble into strife.

XIX.

That awful pause the stranger maid,
And Edith, seized to pray for aid.
As to De Argentine she clung,
Away her veil the stranger flung,
And lovely, 'mid her wild despair,
Fast streamed her eyes, wide flowed her hair.
"O thou, of knighthood once the flower,
Sure refuge in distressful hour,
Thou, who in Judah well hast fought
For our dear faith, and oft hast sought
Renown in knightly exercise,
When this poor hand has dealt the prize,
Say, can thy soul of honour brook
On the unequal strife to look,
When, butchered thus in peaceful hall,
Those once thy friends, my brethren, fall!"—
To Argentine she turned her word,
But her eye sought the Island lord.
A flush like evening's setting flame
Glowed on his cheek; his hardy frame,
As with a brief convulsion, shook:
With hurried voice and eager look,—
"Fear not," he said, "my Isabel!
What said I—Edith!—all is well—
Nay, fear not—I will well provide
The safety of my lovely bride—
My bride?"—but there the accents clung
In tremor to his faltering tongue.

XX.

Now rose De Argentine, to claim
The prisoners in his sovereign's name,
To England's crown, who, vassals sworn,
'Gainst their liege lord had weapon borne—
(Such speech, I ween, was but to hide
His care their safety to provide;
For knight more true in thought and deed
Than Argentine ne'er spurred a steed)—
And Ronald, who his meaning guessed,
Seemed half to sanction the request.
This purpose fiery Torquil broke;—
"Somewhat we've heard of England's yoke,"
He said, "and, in our islands, fame
Hath whispered of a lawful claim,
That calls the Bruce fair Scotland's lord,
Though dispossessed by foreign sword.
This craves reflection—but though right
And just the charge of England's knight,
Let England's crown her rebels seize,
Where she has power;—in towers like these,
'Midst Scottish chieftains summoned here
To bridal mirth and bridal cheer,
Be sure, with no consent of mine,
Shall either Lorn or Argentine
With chains or violence, in our sight,
Oppress a brave and banished knight."—

XXI.

Then waked the wild debate again,
With brawling threat and clamour vain.
Vassals and menials, thronging in,
Lent their brute rage to swell the din:
When, far and wide, a bugle clang
From the dark ocean upward rang.
"The abbot comes!" they cry at once,
"The holy man, whose favoured glance
Hath sainted visions known;
Angels have met him on the way,
Beside the blessed martyrs' bay,
And by Columba's stone.
His monks have heard their hymnings high
Sound from the summit of Dun-Y,
To cheer his penance lone,
When at each cross, on girth and wold,
(Their number thrice an hundred fold,)
His prayer he made, his beads he told,
With aves many a one—
He comes our feuds to reconcile,
A sainted man from sainted isle;
We will his holy doom abide,—
The abbot shall our strife decide."—

XXII.

Scarcely this fair accord was o'er,
When through the wide revolving door
The black-stoled brethren wind;
Twelve sandalled monks, who relics bore,
With many a torch-bearer before,
And many a cross behind.
Then sunk each fierce uplifted hand,
And dagger bright and flashing brand
Dropped swiftly at the sight;
They vanished from the churchman's eye,
As shooting stars, that glance and die,
Dart from the vault of night.

XXIII.

The abbot on the threshold stood,
And in his hand the holy rood;
Back on his shoulders flowed his hood,
The torches' glaring ray

Showed, in its red and flashing light,
His withered cheek and amice white,
His blue eye glistening cold and bright,
His tresses scant and gray.
"Fair lords," he said, "our lady's love,
And peace be with you from above,
And benedicite!—
—But what means this? no peace is here!—
Do dirks unsheathed suit bridal cheer?
Or are these naked brands
A seemly show for churchman's sight,
When he comes summoned to unite
Betrothed hearts and hands?"

XXIV.

Then, cloaking hate with fiery zeal,
Proud Lorn first answered the appeal;—
"Thou comest, O holy man,
True sons of blessed church to greet,
But little deeming here to meet
A wretch, beneath the ban
Of pope and church, for murder done
E'en on the sacred altar-stone!—
Well mayest thou wonder we should know
Such miscreant here, nor lay him low,
Or dream of greeting, peace, or truce,
With excommunicated Bruce!
Yet well I grant, to end debate,
Thy sainted voice decide his fate."—

XXV.

Then Ronald pled the stranger's cause,
And knighthood's oath and honour's laws;
And Isabel, on bended knee,
Brought prayers and tears to back the plea;
And Edith lent her generous aid,
And wept, and Lorn for mercy prayed.
"Hence," he exclaimed, "degenerate maid!
Was't not enough to Ronald's bower
I brought thee, like a paramour,[11]
Or bond-maid at her master's gate,
His careless cold approach to wait?—
But the bold lord of Cumberland,
The gallant Clifford, seeks thy hand;
His it shall be—Nay, no reply!
Hence! till those rebel eyes be dry."—
With grief the abbot heard and saw,
Yet nought relaxed his brow of awe.

XXVI.

Then Argentine, in England's name,
So highly urged his sovereign's claim,
He waked a spark, that, long suppressed,
Had smouldered in lord Ronald's breast;
And now, as from the flint the fire,
Flashed forth at once his generous ire.—
"Enough of noble blood," he said,
"By English Edward had been shed,
Since matchless Wallace first had been
In mock'ry crowned with wreaths of green,[12]
And done to death by felon hand,
For guarding well his father's land.
Where's Nigel Bruce? and De la Haye,
And valiant Seton—where are they?
Where Somerville, the kind and free?
And Fraser, flower of chivalry?[13]
Have they not been on gibbet bound,
Their quarters flung to hawk and hound,
And hold we here a cold debate,
To yield more victims to their fate?
What! can the English leopard's mood
Never be gorged with northern blood?
Was not the life of Athole shed,
To sooth the tyrant's sickened bed?[14]
And must his word, at dying day,
Be nought but quarter, hang, and slay!—[15]
Thou frown'st, De Argentine.—My gage
Is prompt to prove the strife I wage."—

XXVII.

"Nor deem," said stout Dunvegan's knight,
"That thou shalt brave alone the fight!
By saints of isle and mainland both,
By Woden wild, (my grandsire's oath,)[16]
Let Rome and England do their worst,
Howe'er attainted or accursed,
If Bruce shall e'er find friends again,
Once more to brave a battle plain,
If Douglas couch again his lance,
Or Randolph dare another chance,
Old Torquil will not be to lack,
With twice a thousand at his back.—
Nay, chafe not at my bearing bold,
Good abbot! for thou knowest of old,
Torquil's rude thought and stubborn will
Smack of the wild Norwegian still;
Nor will I barter Freedom's cause
For England's wealth or Rome's applause."

XXVIII.

The abbot seemed with eye severe
The hardy chieftain's speech to hear;
Then on king Robert turned the monk,
But twice his courage came and sunk,
Confronted with the hero's look;
Twice fell his eye, his accents shook.
At length, resolved in tone and brow,
Sternly he questioned him—"And thou,
Unhappy! what hast thou to plead,
Why I denounce not on thy deed
That awful doom, which canons tell
Shuts paradise, and opens hell;
Anathema of power so dread,
It blends the living with the dead,
Bids each good angel soar away,
And every ill one claim his prey;
Expels thee from the church's care,
And deafens heaven against thy prayer;
Arms every hand against thy life,
Bans all who aid thee in the strife,
Nay, each whose succour, cold and scant,
With meanest alms relieves thy want;
Haunts thee while living,—and, when dead,
Dwells on thy yet devoted head,
Rends honour's scutcheon from thy hearse,
Stills o'er thy bier the holy verse,
And spurns thy corpse from hallowed ground,
Flung like vile carrion to the hound!
Such is the dire and desperate doom,
For sacrilege decreed by Rome;
And such the well-deserved meed
Of thine unhallowed, ruthless deed."

XXIX.

"Abbot!" the Bruce replied, "thy charge
It boots not to dispute at large.
This much, howe'er, I bid thee know,
No selfish vengeance dealt the blow,
For Comyn died his country's foe.
Nor blame I friends whose ill-timed speed
Fulfilled my soon-repented deed,
Nor censure those from whose stern tongue
The dire anathema has rung.
I only blame mine own wild ire,
By Scotland's wrongs incensed to fire.
Heaven knows my purpose to atone,
Far as I may, the evil done,
And hears a penitent's appeal
From papal curse and prelate's zeal.

My first and dearest task achieved,
Fair Scotland from her thrall relieved,
Shall many a priest in cope and stole
Say requiem for red Comyn's soul,
While I the blessed cross advance,
And expiate this unhappy chance,
In Palestine, with sword and lance.[17]
But, while content the church should know
My conscience owns the debt I owe,
Unto De Argentine and Lorn
The name of traitor I return,
Bid them defiance stern and high,
And give them in their throats the lie!
These brief words spoke, I speak no more.
Do what thou wilt; my shrift is o'er."

XXX.

Like man by prodigy amazed,
Upon the king the abbot gazed;
Then o'er his pallid features glance
Convulsions of ecstatic trance.
His breathing came more thick and fast,
And from his pale blue eyes were cast
Strange rays of wild and wandering light;
Uprise his locks of silver white,
Flushed is his brow, through every vein
In azure tide the currents strain,
And undistinguished accents broke
The awful silence ere he spoke.

XXXI.

"De Bruce! I rose with purpose dread
To speak my curse upon thy head,[18]
And give thee as an outcast o'er
To him who burns to shed thy gore;
But, like the Midianite of old,
Who stood on Zophim, heaven-controlled,
I feel within mine aged breast
A power that will not be repressed.[19]
It prompts my voice, it swells my veins,
It burns, it maddens, it constrains!
De Bruce, thy sacrilegious blow
Hath on God's altar slain thy foe;
O'er-mastered yet by high behest,
I bless thee, and thou shalt be blessed!"
He spoke, and o'er the astonished throng
Was silence, awful, deep, and long.

XXXII.

Again that light has fired his eye,
Again his form swells bold and high,
The broken voice of age is gone,
'Tis vigorous manhood's lofty tone:
"Thrice vanquished on the battle-plain,
Thy followers slaughtered, fled, or ta'en,
A hunted wanderer on the wild,[20]
On foreign shores a man exiled,
Disowned, deserted, and distressed,
I bless thee, and thou shalt be blessed:
Blessed in the hall and in the field,
Under the mantle as the shield.
Avenger of thy country's shame,
Restorer of her injured fame,
Blessed in thy sceptre and thy sword,
De Bruce, fair Scotland's rightful lord,
Blessed in thy deeds and in thy fame,
What lengthened honours wait thy name!
In distant ages, sire to son
Shall tell thy tale of freedom won,
And teach his infants, in the use
Of earliest speech, to falter Bruce.
Go, then, triumphant! sweep along
Thy course, the theme of many a song!
The Power, whose dictates swell my breast,
Hath blessed thee, and thou shalt be blessed!—
Enough—my short lived strength decays,
And sinks the momentary blaze.—
Heaven hath our destined purpose broke,
Not here must nuptial vow be spoke;
Brethren, our errand here is o'er,
Our task discharged.—Unmoor, unmoor!"—
His priests received the exhausted monk,
As breathless in their arms he sunk,
Punctual his orders to obey,
The train refused all longer stay,
Embarked, raised sail, and bore away.

CANTO III.

I.

Hast thou not marked, when o'er thy startled head
Sudden and deep the thunder-peal has rolled,
How, when its echoes fell, a silence dead
Sunk on the wood, the meadow, and the wold?
The rye-grass shakes not on the sod-built fold,
The rustling aspen's leaves are mute and still,
The wall-flower waves not on the ruined hold,
Till, murmuring distant first, then near and shrill,
The savage whirlwind wakes, and sweeps the groaning hill!

II.

Artornish! such a silence sunk
Upon thy halls, when that gray monk
His prophet-speech had spoke;
And his obedient brethren's sail
Was stretched to meet the southern gale
Before a whisper woke.
Then murmuring sounds of doubt and fear,
Close poured in many an anxious ear,
The solemn stillness broke;
And still they gazed with eager guess,
Where, in an oriel's deep recess,
The Island prince seemed bent to press
What Lorn, by his impatient cheer,
And gesture fierce, scarce deigned to hear.

III.

Starting at length with frowning look,
His hand he clenched, his head he shook,
And sternly flung apart:—
"And deem'st thou me so mean of mood,
As to forget the mortal feud,
And clasp the hand with blood embrued
From my dear kinsman's heart?
Is this thy rede?—a due return
For ancient league and friendship sworn!
But well our mountain proverb shows
The faith of Islesmen ebbs and flows.
Be it e'en so—believe, ere long,
He that now bears shall wreak the wrong.—
Call Edith—call the maid of Lorn!
My sister, slaves!—for further scorn,
Be sure nor she nor I will stay.—
Away, De Argentine, away!—
We nor ally nor brother know,
In Bruce's friend, or England's foe."

IV.

But who the chieftain's rage can tell,
When, sought from lowest dungeon cell
To highest tower the castle round,
No lady Edith was there found!
He shouted, "Falsehood!—treachery!—
Revenge and blood!—a lordly meed
To him that will avenge the deed!
A baron's lands!"—His frantic mood
Was scarcely by the news withstood,

That Morag shared his sister's flight,
And that, in hurry of the night,
'Scaped noteless, and without remark,
Two strangers sought the abbot's bark.
"Man every galley!—fly—pursue!
The priest his treachery shall rue!
Ay, and the time shall quickly come,
When we shall hear the thanks that Rome
Will pay his feigned prophecy!"
Such was fierce Lorn's indignant cry;
And Cormac Doil in haste obeyed,
Hoisted his sail, his anchor weighed,
(For, glad of each pretext for spoil,
A pirate sworn was Cormac Doil.)[1]
But others, lingering, spoke apart,
"The maid has given her maiden heart
To Ronald of the Isles;
And, fearful lest her brother's word
Bestow her on that English lord,
She seeks Iona's piles;
And wisely deems it best to dwell
A vot'ress in the holy cell,
Until these feuds, so fierce and fell,
The abbot reconciles."

V.

As, impotent of ire, the hall
Echoed to Lorn's impatient call.
"My horse, my mantle, and my train!
Let none who honours Lorn remain!"
Courteous, but stern, a bold request
To Bruce De Argentine expressed—
"Lord earl," he said,—"I cannot choose
But yield such title to the Bruce,
Though name and earldom both are gone,
Since he braced rebel's armour on—
But, earl or serf—rude phrase was thine
Of late, and lanched at Argentine;
Such as compels me to demand
Redress of honour at thy hand.
We need not to each other tell,
That both can wield their weapons well;
Then do me but the soldier grace,
This glove upon thy helm to place,
Where we may meet in fight;
And I will say, as still I've said,
Though by ambition far misled,
Thou art a noble knight."

VI.

"And I," the princely Bruce replied,
"Might term it stain on knighthood's pride,
That the bright sword of Argentine
Should in a tyrant's quarrel shine;
But, for your brave request,
Be sure the honoured pledge you gave
In every battle field shall wave
Upon my helmet-crest;
Believe, that if my hasty tongue
Hath done thine honour causeless wrong,
It shall be well redressed.
Nor dearer to my soul was glove,
Bestowed in youth by lady's love,
Than this which thou hast given!
Thus, then, my noble foe I greet;
Health and high fortune till we meet,
And then—what pleases heaven."

VII.

Thus parted they—for now, with sound
Like waves rolled back from rocky ground,
The friends of Lorn retire;
Each mainland chieftain, with his train,
Draws to his mountain towers again,
Pondering how mortal schemes prove vain,
And mortal hopes expire.
But through the castle double guard,
By Ronald's charge, kept wakeful ward,
Wicket and gate were trebly barred
By beam and bolt and chain;
Then of the guests, in courteous sort,
He prayed excuse for mirth broke short,
And bade them in Artornish fort
In confidence remain.
Now torch and menial tendance led
Chieftain and knight to bower and bed,
And beads were told, and aves said,
And soon they sunk away
Into such sleep, as wont to shed
Oblivion on the weary head,
After a toilsome day.

VIII.

But soon up-roused, the monarch cried
To Edward, slumbering by his side,
"Awake, or sleep for aye!
E'en now there jarred a secret door—
A taper light gleams on the floor—
Up, Edward, up, I say!
Some one glides in like midnight ghost—
—Nay, strike not! 'tis our noble host."
Advancing then his taper's flame,
Ronald stept forth, and with him came
Dunvegan's chief—each bent the knee
To Bruce, in sign of fealty,
And proffered him his sword,
And hailed him, in a monarch's style,
As king of mainland and of isle,
And Scotland's rightful lord.
"And O," said Ronald, "Owned of heaven!
Say, is my erring youth forgiven,
By falsehood's arts from duty driven,
Who rebel falchion drew,
Yet ever to thy deeds of fame,
E'en while I strove against thy claim,
Paid homage just and true?"—
"Alas! dear youth, the unhappy time,"
Answered the Bruce, "must bear the crime,
Since, guiltier far than you,
E'en I——" he paused; for Falkirk's woes
Upon his conscious soul arose.[2]
The chieftain to his breast he pressed,
And in a sigh concealed the rest.

IX.

They proffered aid, by arms and might,
To repossess him in his right;
But well their counsels must be weighed,
Ere banners raised and musters made,
For English hire and Lorn's intrigues
Bound many chiefs in southern leagues.
In answer, Bruce his purpose bold
To his new vassals frankly told.
"The winter worn in exile o'er,
I longed for Carrick's kindred shore;
I thought upon my native Ayr,
And longed to see the burly fare
That Clifford makes, whose lordly call
Now echoes through my father's hall.
But first my course to Arran led,
Where valiant Lennox gathers head,
And on the sea, by tempests tossed,
Our barks dispersed, our purpose crossed,
Mine own, a hostile sail to shun,
Far from her destined course had run,
When that wise will, which masters ours,
Compelled us to your friendly towers."—

X.

Then Torquil spoke: "The time craves speed!
We must not linger in our deed,
But instant pray our sovereign liege
To shun the perils of a siege.
The vengeful Lorn, with all his powers,
Lies but too near Artornish towers,
And England's light-armed vessels ride,
Not distant far, the waves of Clyde,
Prompt at these tidings to unmoor,
And sweep each strait, and guard each shore;
Then, till this fresh alarm pass by,
Secret and safe my liege must lie
In the far bounds of friendly Skye,
Torquil thy pilot and thy guide."—
"Not so, brave chieftain," Ronald cried;
"Myself will on my sovereign wait,
And raise in arms the men of Sleate,
Whilst thou, renowned where chiefs debate,
Shalt sway their souls by counsel sage,
And awe them by thy locks of age."—
—"And if my words in weight shall fail,
This ponderous sword shall turn the scale."—

XI.

"The scheme," said Bruce, "contents me well;
Meantime, 'twere best that Isabel,
For safety, with my bark and crew,
Again to friendly Erin drew.
There Edward, too, shall with her wend,
In need to cheer her and defend,
And muster up each scattered friend."
Here seemed it as lord Ronald's ear
Would other counsel gladlier hear;
But, all achieved as soon as planned,
Both barks, in secret armed and manned,
From out the haven bore;
On different voyage forth they ply,
This for the coast of winged Skye,
And that for Erin's shore.

XII.

With Bruce and Ronald bides the tale.
To favouring winds they gave the sail,
Till Mull's dark headlands scarce they knew,
And Ardnamurchan's hills were blue.
But then the squalls blew close and hard,
And, fain to strike the galley's yard,
And take them to the oar,
With these rude seas, in weary plight,
They strove the live-long day and night,
Nor till the dawning had a sight
Of Skye's romantic shore
Where Coolin stoops him to the west,
They saw upon his shivered crest
The sun's arising gleam;
But such the labour and delay,
Ere they were moored in Scavigh bay,
(For calmer heaven compelled to stay,)
He shot a western beam.
Then Ronald said, "if true mine eye,
These are the savage wilds that lie
North of Strathnardill and Dunskye;[3]
No human foot comes here,
And, since these adverse breezes blow,
If my good liege love hunter's bow,
What hinders that on land we go,
And strike a mountain-deer?
Allan, my page, shall with us wend,
A bow full deftly can he bend,
And, if we meet an herd, may send
A shaft shall mend our cheer."—
Then each took bow and bolts in hand,
Their row-boat lanched and leapt to land,
And left their skiff and train,
Where a wild stream, with headlong shock,
Came brawling down its bed of rock,
To mingle with the main.

XIII.

Awhile their route they silent made,
As men who stalk for mountain-deer,
Till the good Bruce to Ronald said,
"St. Mary! what a scene is here!
I've traversed many a mountain-strand,
Abroad and in my native land,
And it has been my lot to tread
Where safety more than pleasure led;
Thus, many a waste I've wandered o'er,
Clombe many a crag, crossed many a moor,
But, by my halidome,
A scene so rude, so wild as this,
Yet so sublime in barrenness,
Ne'er did my wandering footsteps press,
Where'er I happed to roam."—

XIV.

No marvel thus the monarch spake;
For rarely human eye has known
A scene so stern as that dread lake,
With its dark ledge of barren stone.
Seems that primeval earthquake's sway
Hath rent a strange and shattered way
Through the rude bosom of the hill,
And that each naked precipice,
Sable ravine, and dark abyss,
Tells of the outrage still.
The wildest glen, but this, can show
Some touch of nature's genial glow;
On high Benmore green mosses grow,
And heath-bells bud in deep Glencroe,
And copse on Cruchan-Ben;
But here,—above, around, below,
On mountain or in glen,
Nor tree, nor shrub, nor plant, nor flower,
Nor aught of vegetative power,
The weary eye may ken.
For all is rocks at random thrown,
Black waves, bare crags, and banks of stone,
As if were here denied
The summer sun, the spring's sweet dew,
That clothe with many a varied hue
The bleakest mountain side.

XV.

And wilder, forward as they wound,
Were the proud cliffs and lake profound:
Huge terraces of granite black
Afforded rude and cumbered track;
For from the mountain hoar,
Hurled headlong in some night of fear,
When yelled the wolf and fled the deer,
Loose crags had toppled o'er;
And some, chance-poised and balanced, lay,
So that a stripling arm might sway
A mass no host could raise,
In nature's rage at random thrown,
Yet trembling like the druid's stone
On its precarious base.
The evening mists, with ceaseless change,
Now clothed the mountains' lofty range,
Now left their foreheads bare,
And round the skirts their mantle furled,
Or on the sable waters curled,
Or, on the eddying breezes whirled,
Dispersed in middle air.

And oft, condensed, at once they lower,
When, brief and fierce, the mountain shower
Pours like a torrent down,
And when return the sun's glad beams,
Whitened with foam a thousand streams
Leap from the mountain's crown.

XVI.

"This lake," said Bruce, "whose barriers drear
Are precipices sharp and sheer,
Yielding no track for goat or deer,
Save the black shelves we tread,
How term you its dark waves? and how
Yon northern mountain's pathless brow,
And yonder peak of dread,
That to the evening sun uplifts
The grisely gulfs and slaty rifts,
Which seam its shivered head?"
"Coriskin call the dark lake's name,
Coolin the ridge, as bards proclaim,
From old Cuchullin, chief of fame.
But bards, familiar in our isles
Rather with nature's frowns than smiles,
Full oft their careless humours please
By sportive names for scenes like these.
I would old Torquil were to show
His maidens with their breasts of snow,
Or that my noble liege were nigh
To hear his nurse sing lullaby,
(The maids—tall cliffs with breakers white,
The nurse—a torrent's roaring might,)
Or that your eye could see the mood
Of Corryvrekin's whirlpool rude,
When dons the hag her whitened hood—
'Tis thus our islesmen's fancy frames,
For scenes so stern, fantastic names."—

XVII.

Answered the Bruce, "And musing mind
Might here a graver moral find.
These mighty cliffs, that heave on high
Their naked brows to middle sky,
Indifferent to the sun or snow,
Where nought can fade, and nought can blow,
May they not mark a monarch's fate,
Raised high 'mid storms of strife and state,
Beyond life's lowlier pleasures placed,
His soul a rock, his heart a waste?
O'er hope and love and fear aloft
High rears his crowned head—But soft!
Look, underneath yon jutting crag
Are hunters and a slaughtered stag.
Who may they be? But late you said
No steps these desert regions tread!"

XVIII.

"So said I—and believed, in sooth,"
Ronald replied, "I spoke the truth.
Yet now I spy, by yonder stone,
Five men—they mark us, and come on;
And by their badge on bonnet borne,
I guess them of the land of Lorn,
Foes to my liege."—"So let it be;
I've faced worse odds than five to three—
But the poor page can little aid;
Then be our battle thus arrayed,
If our free passage they contest;
Cope thou with two, I'll match the rest."
"Not so, my liege—for by my life,
This sword shall meet the treble strife;
My strength, my skill in arms, more small,
And less the loss should Ronald fall.
But islesmen soon to soldiers grow,
Allan has sword as well as bow,
And were my monarch's order given,
Two shafts should make our number even."
"No! not to save my life!" he said;
"Enough of blood rests on my head,
Too rashly spilled—we soon shall know,
Whether they come as friend or foe."

XIX.

Nigh came the strangers, and more nigh;
Still less they pleased the monarch's eye.
Men were they all of evil mien,
Down-looked, unwilling to be seen;[4]
They moved with half-resolved pace,
And bent on earth each gloomy face.
The foremost two were fair arrayed,
With brogue and bonnet, trews and plaid,
And bore the arms of mountaineers,
Daggers and broadswords, bows and spears.
The three, that lagged small space behind,
Seemed serfs of more degraded kind;
Goat-skins or deer-hides, o'er them cast,
Made a rude fence against the blast;
Their arms and feet and heads were bare,
Matted their beards, unshorn their hair;
For arms, the caitiffs bore in hand,
A club, an axe, a rusty brand.

XX.

Onward, still mute, they kept the track;
"Tell who ye be, or else stand back,"
Said Bruce; "In deserts when they meet,
Men pass not as in peaceful street."
Still, at his stern command, they stood,
And proffered greeting brief and rude,
But acted courtesy so ill,
As seemed of fear, and not of will.
"Wanderers we are, as you may be;
Men hither driven by wind and sea,
Who, if you list to taste our cheer,
Will share with you this fallow deer."
"If from the sea, where lies your bark?"
"Ten fathom deep in ocean dark!
Wrecked yesternight; but we are men,
Who little sense of peril ken.
The shades come down—the day is shut—
Will you go with us to our hut?"
"Our vessel waits us in the bay;
Thanks for your proffer—have good day."—
"Was that your galley, then, which rode
Not far from shore when evening glowed?"
"It was."—"Then spare your needless pain,
There will she now be sought in vain.
We saw her from the mountain head,
When with St. George's blazon red
A southern vessel bore in sight,
And yours raised sail, and took to flight."

XXI.

"Now, by the rood, unwelcome news!"
Thus with lord Ronald communed Bruce;
"Nor rests there light enough to show
If this their tale be true or no.
The men seem bred of churlish kind,
Yet rugged brows have bosoms kind;
We will go with them—food and fire
And sheltering roof our wants require.
Sure guard 'gainst treachery will we keep,
And watch by turns our comrades' sleep.—
Good fellows, thanks; your guests we'll be,
And well will pay the courtesy.
Come, lead us where your lodging lies,
—Nay, soft! we mix not companies.—
Show us the path o'er crag and stone,
And we will follow you;—lead on."—

XXII.

They reached the dreary cabin, made
Of sails against a rock displayed,
And there, on entering, found
A slender boy, whose form and mien
Ill suited with such savage scene,
In cap and cloak of velvet green,
Low seated on the ground.
His garb was such as minstrels wear,
Dark was his hue, and dark his hair,
His youthful cheek was marred by care,
His eyes in sorrow drowned.
"Whence this poor boy?"—As Ronald spoke,
The voice his trance of anguish broke;
As if awaked from ghastly dream,
He raised his head with start and scream,
And wildly gazed around;
Then to the wall his face he turned,
And his dark neck with blushes burned.

XXIII.

"Whose is the boy?" again he said.—
"By chance of war our captive made;
He may be yours, if you should hold
That music has more charms than gold;
For, though from earliest childhood mute,
The lad can deftly touch the lute,
And on the rote and viol play,
And well can drive the time away
For those who love such glee;
For me, the favouring breeze, when loud
It pipes upon the galley shroud,
Makes blither melody."
"Hath he, then, sense of spoken sound?"
"Ay; so his mother bade us know,
A crone in our late shipwreck drowned,
And hence the silly stripling's wo.
More of the youth I cannot say,
Our captive but since yesterday;
When wind and weather waxed so grim,
We little listed think of him.—
But why waste time in idle words?
Sit to your cheer—unbelt your swords."
Sudden the captive turned his head,
And one quick glance to Ronald sped.
It was a keen and warning look,
And well the chief the signal took.

XXIV.

"Kind host," he said, "our needs require
A separate board and separate fire;
For know, that on a pilgrimage
Wend I, my comrade, and this page.
And sworn to vigil and to fast,
Long as this hallowed task shall last,
We never doff the plaid or sword,
Or feast us at a stranger's board;
And never share one common sleep,
But one must still his vigil keep.
Thus, for our separate use, good friend,
We'll hold this hut's remoter end."—
"A churlish vow," the eldest said,
"And hard, methinks, to be obeyed.
How say you, if, to wreak the scorn,
That pays our kindness harsh return,
We should refuse to share our meal?"—
—"Then say we, that our swords are steel!
And our vow binds us not to fast,
Where gold or force may buy repast."—
Their host's dark brow grew keen and fell,
His teeth are clenched, his features swell;
Yet sunk the felon's moody ire,
Before lord Ronald's glance of fire,
Nor could his craven courage brook
The monarch's calm and dauntless look.
With laugh constrained,—"Let every man
Follow the fashion of his clan!
Each to his separate quarters keep,
And feed or fast, or wake or sleep."—

XXV.

Their fire at separate distance burns,
By turns they eat, keep guard by turns;
For evil seemed that old man's eye,
Dark and designing, fierce yet shy.
Still he avoided forward look,
But slow and circumspectly took
A circling, never-ceasing glance,
By doubt and cunning marked at once,
Which shot a mischief-boding ray,
From under eyebrows shagged and gray.
The younger, too, who seemed his son,
Had that dark look the timid shun;
The half-clad serfs behind them sate,
And scowled a glare 'twixt fear and hate—
Till all, as darkness onward crept,
Couched down and seemed to sleep, or slept.
Nor he, that boy, whose powerless tongue
Must trust his eyes to wail his wrong,
A longer watch of sorrow made,
But stretched his limbs to slumber laid.

XXVI.

Not in his dangerous host confides
The king, but wary watch provides.
Ronald keeps ward till midnight past,
Then wakes the king, young Allan last;
Thus ranked, to give the youthful page
The rest required by tender age.
---What is lord Ronald's wakeful thought,
To chase the languor toil had brought?---
(For deem not that he deigned to throw
Much care upon such coward foe,)---
He thinks of lovely Isabel,
When at her foeman's feet she fell,
Nor less when, placed in princely selle,
She glanced on him with favouring eyes,
At Woodstock when he won the prize.
Nor, fair in joy, in sorrow fair,
In pride of place as 'mid despair,
Must she alone engross his care.
His thoughts to his betrothed bride,
To Edith, turn---O how decide,
When here his love and heart are given,
And there his faith stands plight to heaven!
No drowsy ward 'tis his to keep,
For seldom lovers long for sleep.
Till sung his midnight hymn the owl,
Answered the dog-fox with his howl,
Then waked the king---at his request,
Lord Ronald stretched himself to rest.

XXVII.

What spell was good king Robert's, say
To drive the weary night away?
His was the patriot's burning thought,
Of freedom's battle bravely fought,
Of castles stormed, of cities freed,
Of deep design and daring deed,
Of England's roses reft and torn,
And Scotland's cross in triumph worn,
Of rout and rally, war and truce,—
As heroes think, so thought the Bruce.
No marvel, 'mid such musings high,
Sleep shunned the monarch's thoughtful eye.
Now over Coolin's eastern head
The grayish light begins to spread,

The otter to his cavern drew,
And clamoured shrill the wakening mew;
Then watched the page—to needful rest
The king resigned his anxious breast.

XXVIII.

To Allan's eyes was harder task,
The weary watch their safeties ask.
He trimmed the fire, and gave to shine
With bickering light the splintered pine,
Then gazed awhile where, silent laid,
Their hosts were shrouded by the plaid.
But little fear waked in his mind,
For he was bred of martial kind,
And, if to manhood he arrive,
May match the boldest knight alive.
Then thought he of his mother's tower,
His little sister's green-wood bower,
How there the Easter-gambols pass,
And of Dan Joseph's lengthened mass.
But still before his weary eye
In rays prolonged the blazes die—
Again he roused him—on the lake
Looked forth, where now the twilight flake
Of pale cold dawn began to wake.
On Coolin's cliffs the mist lay furled,
The morning breeze the lake had curled;
The short dark waves, heaved to the land,
With ceaseless plash kissed cliff or sand;—
It was a slumb'rous sound—he turned
To tales at which his youth had burned,
Of pilgrim's path by demon crossed,
Of sprightly elf or yelling ghost,
Of the wild witch's baneful cot,
And mermaid's alabaster grot,
Who bathes her limbs in sunless well
Deep in Strathaird's enchanted cell.[5]
Thither in fancy wrapt he flies,
And on his sight the vaults arise;
That hut's dark walls he sees no more,
His foot is on the marble floor,
And o'er his head the dazzling spars
Gleam like a firmament of stars!
—Hark! hears he not the sea-nymph speak
Her anger in that thrilling shriek?
No! all too late, with Allan's dream
Mingled the captive's warning scream.
As from the ground he strives to start,
A ruffian's dagger finds his heart!
Upwards he casts his dizzy eyes,—
Murmurs his master's name,—and dies!

XXIX.

Not so awoke the king! his hand
Snatched from the flame a knotted brand,
The nearest weapon of his wrath;
With this he crossed the murderer's path,
And venged young Allan well!
The spattered brain and bubbling blood
Hissed on the half-extinguished wood,
The miscreant gasped and fell!
Nor rose in peace the Island lord;
One caitiff died upon his sword,
And one beneath his grasp lies prone,
In mortal grapple overthrown.
But while lord Ronald's dagger drank
The life-blood from his panting flank,
The father ruffian of the band
Behind him rears a coward hand!
—O for a moment's aid,
Till Bruce, who deals no double blow,
Dash to the earth another foe,
Above his comrade laid!
And it is gained—the captive sprung
On the raised arm, and closely clung,
And, ere he shook him loose,
The mastered felon pressed the ground,
And gasped beneath a mortal wound,
While o'er him stands the Bruce.

XXX.

"Miscreant! while lasts thy flitting spark,
Give me to know the purpose dark,
That armed thy hand with murderous knife,
Against offenceless stranger's life?"
"No stranger thou!" with accents fell,
Murmured the wretch, "I know thee well;
And know thee for the foeman sworn
Of my high chief, the mighty Lorn."
—"Speak yet again, and speak the truth
For thy soul's sake!—from whence this youth?
His country, birth, and name declare,
And thus one evil deed repair."
—"Vex me no more!—my blood runs cold—
No more I know than I have told.
We found him in a bark we sought
With different purpose—and I thought ——"
Fate cut him short; in blood and broil,
As he had lived, died Cormac Doil.

XXXI.

Then, resting on his bloody blade,
The valiant Bruce to Ronald said,
"Now shame upon us both!—that boy
Lifts his mute face to heaven,
And clasps his hands, to testify
His gratitude to God on high,
For strange deliverance given.
His speechless gesture thanks hath paid,
Which our free tongues have left unsaid!"
He raised the youth with kindly word,
But marked him shudder at the sword;
He cleansed it from its hue of death,
And plunged the weapon in its sheath.
"Alas, poor child! unfitting part
Fate doomed, when with so soft a heart,
And form so slight as thine,
She made thee first a pirate's slave,
Then, in his stead, a patron gave
Of wayward lot like mine;
A landless prince, whose wandering life
Is but one scene of blood and strife—
Yet scant of friends the Bruce shall be,
But he'll find resting-place for thee.
Come, noble Ronald! o'er the dead
Enough thy generous grief is paid,
And well has Allan's fate been wroke;
Come, wend we hence—the day has broke.
Seek we our bark—I trust the tale
Was false, that she had hoisted sail."

XXXII.

Yet, ere they left that charnel-cell,
The Island lord bade sad farewell
To Allan:—"Who shall tell this tale,"
He said, "in halls of Donagaile!
Oh, who his widowed mother tell,
That, ere his bloom, her fairest fell!
Rest thee, poor youth! and trust my care,
For mass and knell and funeral prayer;
While o'er those caitiffs, where they lie,
The wolf shall snarl, the raven cry!"
And now the eastern mountain's head
On the dark lake threw lustre red;
Bright gleams of gold and purple streak
Ravine and precipice and peak—
(So earthly power at distance shows;
Reveals his splendour, hides his woes.)

O'er sheets of granite, dark and broad,
Rent and unequal lay the road.
In sad discourse the warriors wind,
And the mute captive moves behind.

CANTO IV.

I.

Stranger! if e'er thine ardent step hath traced
The northern realms of ancient Caledon,
Where the proud queen of wilderness hath placed,
By lake and cataract, her lonely throne;
Sublime but sad delight thy soul hath known,
Gazing on pathless glen and mountain high,
Listing where from the cliffs the torrents thrown
Mingle their echoes with the eagle's cry,
And with the sounding lake, and with the moaning sky.

Yes! 'twas sublime, but sad.—The loneliness
Loaded thy heart, the desert tired thine eye;
And strange and awful fears began to press
Thy bosom with a stern solemnity.
Then hast thou wished some woodman's cottage nigh,
Something that showed of life, though low and mean,
Glad sight, its curling wreath of smoke to spy,
Glad sound, its cock's blith carol would have been,
Or children whooping wild beneath the willows green.

Such are the scenes, where savage grandeur wakes
An awful thrill that softens into sighs;
Such feelings rouse them by dim Rannoch's lakes,
In dark Glencoe such gloomy raptures rise:
Or, farther, where, beneath the northern skies,
Chides wild Loch-Eribol his caverns hoar—
But, be the minstrel judge, they yield the prize
Of desert dignity to that dread shore,
That sees grim Coolin rise, and hears Coriskin roar.

II.

Through such wild scenes the champions passed,
When bold halloo and bugle-blast
Upon the breeze came loud and fast.
"There," said the Bruce, "rung Edward's horn!
What can have caused such brief return?
And see, brave Ronald,—see him dart
O'er stock and stone like hunted hart,
Precipitate, as is the use,
In war or sport, of Edward Bruce.
—He marks us, and his eager cry
Will tell his news ere he be nigh."—

III.

Loud Edward shouts, "What make ye here,
Warring upon the mountain deer,
When Scotland wants her king?
A bark from Lennox crossed our track,
With her in speed I hurried back,
These joyful news to bring—
The Stuart stirs in Teviotdale,
And Douglas wakes his native vale;
Thy storm-tossed fleet hath won its way
With little loss to Brodick bay,
And Lennox, with a gallant band,
Waits but thy coming and command
To waft them o'er to Carrick strand.
There are blith news!—but mark the close!
Edward, the deadliest of our foes,
As with his host he northward passed,
Hath on the borders breathed his last."

IV.

Still stood the Bruce—his steady cheek
Was little wont his joy to speak,
But then his colour rose:
"Now, Scotland! shortly shalt thou see,
With God's high will, thy children free,
And vengeance on thy foes!
Yet to no sense of selfish wrongs,
Bear witness with me, heaven, belongs
My joy o'er Edward's bier;[1]
I took my knighthood at his hand,
And lordship held of him, and land,
And well may vouch it here,
That, blot the story from his page,
Of Scotland ruined in his rage,
You read a monarch brave and sage,
And to his people dear."
"Let London burghers mourn her lord,
And Croydon monks his praise record,"
The eager Edward said;
"Eternal as his own, my hate
Surmounts the bounds of mortal fate,
And dies not with the dead!
Such hate was his on Solway's strand,
When vengeance clenched his palsied hand,
That pointed yet to Scotland's land,[2]
As his last accents prayed
Disgrace and curse upon his heir,
If he one Scottish head should spare,
Till stretched upon the bloody lair,
Each rebel corpse was laid!
Such hate was his, when his last breath
Renounced the peaceful house of death,
And bade his bones to Scotland's coast
Be borne by his remorseless host,
As if his dead and stony eye
Could still enjoy her misery!
Such hate was his,—dark, deadly, long;
Mine,—as enduring, deep, and strong!"

V.

"Let women, Edward, war with words,
With curses monks, but men with swords;
Nor doubt of living foes, to sate
Deepest revenge and deadliest hate.
Now, to the sea! behold the beach,
And see the galleys' pendants stretch
Their fluttering length down favouring gale!
Aboard! aboard! and hoist the sail.
Hold we our way for Arran first,
Where met in arms our friends dispersed;
Lennox the loyal, and De la Haye,
And Boyd the bold in battle fray.
I long the hardy band to head,
And see once more my standard spread.—
Does noble Ronald share our course,
Or stay to raise his Island force?"
"Come weal, come wo, by Bruce's side,"
Replied the chief, "will Ronald bide.
And since two galleys yonder ride,
Be mine, so please my liege, dismissed
To wake to arms the clans of Uist,
And all who hear the Minche's roar,
On the Long Island's lonely shore.
The nearer isles, with slight delay,
Ourselves may summon in our way;
And soon on Arran's shore shall meet,
With Torquil's aid, a gallant fleet,
If aught avails their chieftain's hest
Among the islesmen of the west."

VI.

Thus was their venturous council said.
But, ere their sails the galleys spread,

Coriskin dark and Coolin high
Echoed the dirge's doleful cry.
Along that sable lake passed slow,
Fit scene for such a sight of wo,
The sorrowing islesmen, as they bore
The murdered Allan to the shore.
At every pause, with dismal shout,
Their coronach of grief rung out,
And ever, when they moved again,
The pipes resumed their clamorous strain,
And, with the pibroch's shrilling wail,
Mourned the young heir of Donagaile.
Round and around, from cliff and cave,
His answer stern old Coolin gave,
Till high upon his misty side
Languished the mournful notes, and died.
For never sounds, by mortal made,
Attained his high and haggard head,
That echoes but the tempest's moan,
Or the deep thunder's rending groan.

VII.

Merrily, merrily, bounds the bark,
She bounds before the gale,
The mountain breeze from Ben-na-darch
Is joyous in her sail!
With fluttering sound like laughter hoarse,
The cords and canvas strain,
The waves, divided by her force,
In rippling eddies chased her course,
As if they laughed again.
Not down the breeze more blithly flew,
Skimming the wave, the light sea-mew,
Than the gay galley bore
Her course upon that favouring wind,
And Coolin's crest has sunk behind,
And Slapin's caverned shore.
'Twas then that warlike signals wake
Dunseaith's dark towers and Eisord's lake,
And soon from Cavilgarrigh's head
Thick wreaths of eddying smoke were spread;
A summons these of war and wrath,
To the brave clans of Sleate and Strath,
And, ready at the sight,
Each warrior to his weapon sprung,
And targe upon his shoulder flung,
Impatient for the fight.
M'Kinnon's chief, in warfare gray,
Had charge to muster their array,
And guide their barks to Brodick-bay.

VIII.

Signal of Ronald's high command,
A beacon gleamed o'er sea and land,
From Canna's tower, that, steep and gray,
Like falcon-nest o'erhangs the bay.[3]
Seek not the giddy crag to climb,
To view the turret seathed by time;
It is a task of doubt and fear
To aught but goat or mountain-deer.
But rest thee on the silver beach,
And let the aged herdsman teach
His tale of former day;
His cur's wild clamour he shall chide,
And for thy seat, by ocean's side,
His varied plaid display;
Then tell, how with their chieftain came,
In ancient times, a foreign dame
To yonder turret gray;
Stern was her lord's suspicious mind,
Who in so rude a jail confined
So soft and fair a thrall!
And oft when moon on ocean slept,
That lovely lady sate and wept
Upon the castle-wall,
And turned her eye to southern climes,
And thought perchance of happier times,
And touched her lute by fits, and sung
Wild ditties in her native tongue.
And still, when on the cliff and bay
Placid and pale the moonbeams play,
And every breeze is mute,
Upon the lone Hebridean's ear
Steals a strange pleasure mixed with fear,
While from that cliff he seems to hear
The murmur of a lute,
And sounds, as of a captive lone,
That mourns her woes in tongue unknown.—
Strange is the tale—but all too long
Already hath it staid the song—
Yet who may pass them by,
That crag and tower in ruins gray,
Nor to their hapless tenant pay
The tribute of a sigh!

IX.

Merrily, merrily, bounds the bark
O'er the broad ocean driven;
Her path by Ronin's mountains dark
The steersman's hand hath given.
And Ronin's mountains dark have sent
Their hunters to the shore,[4]
And each his ashen bow unbent,
And gave his pastime o'er,
And at the Island lord's command,
For hunting spear took warrior's brand.
On Scoor-Eigg next a warning light
Summoned her warriors to the fight;
A numerous race, ere stern Macleod
O'er their bleak shores in vengeance strode,[5]
When all in vain the ocean cave
Its refuge to its victims gave.
The chief, relentless in his wrath,
With blazing heath blockades the path;
In dense and stifling volumes rolled,
The vapour filled the caverned hold!
The warrior's threat, the infant's plain,
The mother's screams, were heard in vain;
The vengeful chief maintains his fires,
Till in the vault a tribe expires!
The bones which strew that cavern's gloom,
Too well attest their dismal doom.

X.

Merrily, merrily, goes the bark
On a breeze from the northward free,
So shoots through the morning sky the lark,
Or the swan through the summer sea.
The shores of Mull on the eastward lay,
And Ulva dark and Colonsay,
And all the group of islets gay
That guard famed Staffa round.[6]
Then all unknown its columns rose,
Where dark and undisturbed repose
The cormorant had found,
And the shy seal had quiet home,
And weltered in that wond'rous dome,
Where, as to shame the temples decked
By skill of earthly architect,
Nature herself, it seemed, would raise
A minster to her Maker's praise!
Not for a meaner use ascend
Her columns, or her arches bend;
Nor of a theme less solemn tells
That mighty surge that ebbs and swells,

And still, between each awful pause,
From the high vault an answer draws,
In varied tone prolonged and high,
That mocks the organ's melody.
Nor doth its entrance front in vain
To old Iona's holy fane,
That Nature's voice might seem to say,
"Well hast thou done, frail child of clay!
Thy humble powers that stately shrine
Tasked high and hard—but witness mine!"—

XI.

Merrily, merrily, goes the bark,
Before the gale she bounds;
So darts the dolphin from the shark,
Or the deer before the hounds.
They left Loch-Tua on their lee,
And they wakened the men of the wild Tiree,
And the chief of the sandy Coll;
They paused not at Columba's isle,
Though pealed the bells from the holy pile
With long and measured toll;
No time for matin or for mass,
And the sounds of the holy summons pass
Away in the billows' roll.
Lochbuie's fierce and warlike lord
Their signal saw, and grasped his sword,
And verdant Ilay called her host,
And the clans of Jura's rugged coast
Lord Ronald's call obey,
And Scarba's isle, whose tortured shore
Still rings to Corrievreken's roar,
And lonely Colonsay;
—Scenes sung by him who sings no more![7]
His bright and brief career is o'er,
And mute his tuneful strains;
Quenched is his lamp of varied lore,
That loved the light of song to pour;
A distant and a deadly shore
Has Leyden's cold remains!

XII.

Ever the breeze blows merrily,
But the galley ploughs no more the sea.
Lest, rounding wild Cantire, they meet
The southern foemen's watchful fleet,
They held unwonted way;—
Up Tarbat's western lake they bore,
Then dragged their bark the isthmus o'er,[8]
As far as Kilmaconnel's shore,
Upon the eastern bay.
It was a wond'rous sight to see
Topmast and pennon glitter free,
High raised above the green-wood tree,
As on dry land the galley moves,
By cliff and copse and alder groves.
Deep import from that seleouth sign,
Did many a mountain seer divine;
For ancient legends told the Gael,
That when a royal bark should sail
O'er Kilmaconnel moss,
Old Albyn should in fight prevail,
And every foe should faint and quail
Before her silver cross.

XIII.

Now launched once more, the inland sea
They furrow with fair augury,
And steer for Arran's isle;
The sun, ere yet he sunk behind
Ben-ghoil, "the Mountain of the Wind,"
Gave his grim peaks a greeting kind,
And bade Loch-Ranza smile,[9]
Thither their destined course they drew;
It seemed the isle her monarch knew,
So brilliant was the landward view,
The ocean so serene;
Each puny wave in diamonds rolled
O'er the calm deep, where hues of gold
With azure strove and green.
The hill, the vale, the tree, the tower,
Glowed with the tints of evening's hour,
The beech was silver sheen,
The wind breathed soft as lover's sigh,
And, oft renewed, seemed oft to die,
With breathless pause between.
O who, with speech of war and woes,
Would wish to break the soft repose
Of such enchanting scene!

XIV.

Is it of war lord Ronald speaks?
The blush that dies his manly cheeks,
The timid look, and downcast eye,
And faltering voice the theme deny.
And good king Robert's brow expressed,
He pondered o'er some high request,
As doubtful to approve;
Yet in his eye and lip the while
Dwelt the half-pitying glance and smile,
Which manhood's graver mood beguile,
When lovers talk of love.
Anxious his suit lord Ronald pled;
—"And for my bride betrothed," he said,
"My liege has heard the rumour spread
Of Edith from Artornish fled.
Too hard her fate—I claim no right
To blame her for her hasty flight;
Be joy and happiness her lot!
But she hath fled the bridal-knot,
And Lorn recalled his promise plight,
In the assembled chieftains' sight.
When, to fulfil our fathers' band,
I proffered all I could—my hand—
I was repulsed with scorn;
Mine honour I should ill assert,
And worse the feelings of my heart,
If I should play a suitor's part
Again to pleasure Lorn."

XV.

"Young lord," the royal Bruce replied,
"That question must the church decide:
Yet seems it hard, since rumours state
Edith takes Clifford for her mate,
The very tie, which she hath broke,
To thee should still be binding yoke.
But, for my sister Isabel—
The mood of woman who can tell?
I guess the champion of the rock,
Victorious in the tourney shock,
That knight unknown, to whom the prize
She dealt, had favour in her eyes;
But since our brother Nigel's fate,
Our ruined house and hapless state,
From worldly joy and hope estranged,
Much is the hapless mourner changed.
Perchance," here smiled the noble king,
"This tale may other musings bring.
Soon shall we know—yon mountains hide
The little convent of St. Bride;
There, sent by Edward, she must stay,
Till fate shall give more prosperous day;
And thither will I bear thy suit,
Nor will thine advocate be mute."—

XVI.

As thus they talked in earnest mood,
That speechless boy beside them stood.
He stooped his head against the mast,
And bitter sobs came thick and fast,
A grief that would not be repressed,
But seemed to burst his youthful breast.
His hands against his forehead held,
As if by force his tears repelled,
But through his fingers, long and slight,
Fast trilled the drops of crystal bright.
Edward, who walked the deck apart,
First spied the conflict of the heart,
Thoughtless as brave, with bluntness kind
He sought to cheer the sorrower's mind;
By force the slender hand he drew
From those poor eyes that streamed with dew.
As in his hold the stripling strove,—
('Twas a rough grasp, though meant in love,)
Away his tears the warrior swept,
And bade shame on him that he wept.
"I would to heaven, thy helpless tongue
Could tell me who hath wrought thee wrong!
For, were he of our crew the best,
The insult went not unredressed.
Come, cheer thee; thou art now of age
To be a warrior's gallant page;
Thou shalt be mine!—a palfrey fair
O'er hill and holt my boy shall bear,
To hold my bow in hunting grove,
Or speed on errand to my love:
For well I wot thou wilt not tell
The temple where my wishes dwell."—

XVII.

Bruce interposed,—"Gay Edward, no,
This is no youth to hold thy bow,
To fill thy goblet, or to bear
Thy message light to lighter fair.
Thou art a patron all too wild
And thoughtless, for this orphan child.
See'st thou not how apart he steals,
Keeps lonely couch, and lonely meals?
Fitter by far in yon calm cell
To tend our sister Isabel,
With father Augustin to share
The peaceful change of convent prayer,
Than wander wild adventures through,
With such a reckless guide as you."—
"Thanks, brother!" Edward answered gay,
"For the high laud thy words convey!
But we may learn some future day,
If thou or I can this poor boy
Protect the best, or best employ.
Meanwhile, our vessel nears the strand;
Lanch we the boat, and seek the land."—

XVIII.

To land king Robert lightly sprung,
And thrice aloud his bugle rung,
With note prolonged, and varied strain,
Till bold Ben-ghoil replied again.
Good Douglas then, and De la Haye,
Had in a glen a hart at bay,
And Lennox cheered the laggard hounds,
When waked that horn the green-wood bounds.
"It is the foe!" cried Boyd, who came
In breathless haste with eye on flame,—
"It is the foe!—Each valiant lord
Fling by his bow, and grasp his sword!"
"Not so," replied the good lord James,
"That blast no English bugle claims.
Oft have I heard it fire the fight,
Cheer the pursuit, or stop the flight.
Dead were my heart, and deaf mine ear,
If Bruce should call, nor Douglas hear!
Each to Loch-Ranza's margin spring;
That blast was winded by the king!"—[10]

XIX.

Fast to their mates the tidings spread,
And fast to shore the warriors sped.
Bursting from glen and green-wood tree,
High waked their loyal jubilee!
Around the royal Bruce they crowd,
And clasped his hands, and wept aloud.
Veterans of early fields were there,
Whose helmets pressed their hoary hair,
Whose swords and axes bore a stain
From life-blood of the red-haired Dane;
And boys, whose hands scarce brooked to wield
The heavy sword or bossy shield.
Men too were there, that bore the scars
Impressed in Albyn's woful wars,
At Falkirk's fierce and fatal fight,
Teyndrum's dread rout and Methven's flight.
The might of Douglas there was seen,
There Lennox with his graceful mien;
Kirkpatrick, Closeburn's dreaded knight;
The Lindsay, fiery, fierce, and light;
The heir of murdered De la Haye,
And Boyd the grave, and Seton gay.
Around their king regained they pressed,
Wept, shouted, clasped him to their breast,
And young and old, and serf and lord,
And he who ne'er unsheathed a sword,
And he in many a peril tried,
Alike resolved the brunt to bide,
And live or die by Bruce's side!

XX.

Oh, War! thou hast thy fierce delight,
Thy gleams of joy, intensely bright!
Such gleams, as from thy polished shield
Fly dazzling o'er the battle-field!
Such transports wake, severe and high,
Amid the pealing conquest-cry;
Scarce less, when, after battle lost,
Muster the remnants of a host,
And as each comrade's name they tell,
Who in the well-fought conflict fell,
Knitting stern brow o'er flashing eye,
Vow to avenge them or to die!—
Warriors!—and where are warriors found,
If not on martial Britain's ground?
And who, when waked with note of fire,
Love more than they the British lyre?
Know ye not, hearts to honour dear!
That joy, deep-thrilling, stern, severe,
At which the heart-strings vibrate high,
And wake the fountains of the eye?
And blame ye, then, the Bruce, if trace
Of tear is on his manly face,
When, scanty reliques of the train
That hailed at Scone his early reign,
This patriot band around him hung,
And to his knees and bosom clung?
Blame ye the Bruce?—his brother blamed,
But shared the weakness, while, ashamed,
With haughty laugh his head he turned,
And dashed away the tear he scorned.[11]

XXI.

'Tis morning, and the convent bell
Long time had ceased its matin knell,
Within thy walls, saint Bride!

An aged sister sought the cell
Assigned to lady Isabel,
And hurriedly she cried,
"Haste, gentle lady, haste—there waits
A noble stranger at the gates;
Saint Bride's poor vot'ress ne'er has seen
A knight of such a princely mien;
His errand, as he bade me tell,
Is with the lady Isabel."
The princess rose, for on her knee
Low bent, she told her rosary,—
"Let him by thee his purpose teach;
I may not give a stranger speech."
"Saint Bride forefend, thou royal maid!"
The portress crossed herself, and said,—
"Not to be prioress might I
Debate his will, his suit deny."
"Has earthly show then, simple fool,
Power o'er a sister of thy rule,
And art thou, like the worldly train,
Subdued by splendours light and vain?"

XXII.

"No, lady! in old eyes like mine
Gauds have no glitter, gems no shine!
Nor grace his rank attendants vain,
One youthful page is all his train.
It is the form, the eye, the word,
The bearing of that stranger lord;
His stature, manly, bold, and tall,
Built like a castle's battled wall,
Yet moulded in such just degrees,
His giant-strength seems lightsome ease.
Close as the tendrils of the vine
His locks upon his forehead twine,
Jet-black, save where some touch of gray
Has ta'en the youthful hue away.
Weather and war their rougher trace
Have left on that majestic face;—
But 'tis his dignity of eye!
There, if a suppliant, would I fly,
Secure, 'mid danger, wrongs, and grief,
Of sympathy, redress, relief—
That glance, if guilty, would I dread
More than the doom that spoke me dead!"—
"Enough, enough," the princess cried,
"'Tis Scotland's hope, her joy, her pride!
To meaner front was ne'er assigned
Such mastery o'er the common mind—
Bestowed thy high designs to aid,
How long, O heaven! how long delayed!
Haste, Mona, haste, to introduce
My darling brother, royal Bruce!"

XXIII.

They met like friends who part in pain,
And meet in doubtful hope again.
But when subdued that fitful swell,
The Bruce surveyed the humble cell;
"And this is thine, poor Isabel,—
That pallet-couch, and naked wall,
For room of state, and bed of pall;
For costly robes and jewels rare,
A string of beads and zone of hair;
And for the trumpet's sprightly call
To sport or banquet, grove or hall,
The bell's grim voice divides thy care,
'Twixt hours of penitence and prayer!
O ill for thee, my royal claim
From the first David's sainted name!
O wo for thee, that while he sought
His right, thy brother feebly fought!"

XXIV.

"Now lay these vain regrets aside,
And be the unshaken Bruce!" she cried.
"For more I glory to have shared
The woes thy venturous spirit dared,
When raising first thy valiant band
In rescue of thy native land,
Than had fair fortune set me down
The partner of an empire's crown.
And grieve not that on pleasure's stream
No more I drive in giddy dream,
For heaven the erring pilot knew,
And from the gulf the vessel drew,
Tried me with judgments, stern and great,
My house's ruin, thy defeat,
Poor Nigel's death, till, tamed, I own,
My hopes are fixed on heaven alone;
Nor e'er shall earthly prospects win
My heart to this vain world of sin."—

XXV.

"Nay, Isabel, for such stern choice,
First wilt thou wait thy brother's voice;
Then ponder if in convent scene
No softer thoughts might intervene—
Say they were of that unknown knight,
Victor in Woodstock's tourney-fight—
Nay, if his name such blush you owe,
Victorious o'er a fairer foe!"—
Truly his penetrating eye
Hath caught that blush's passing die,—
Like the last beam of evening thrown
On a white cloud,—just seen and gone.
Soon with calm cheek and steady eye,
The princess made composed reply:
"I guess my brother's meaning well;
For not so silent is the cell,
But we have heard the islesmen all
Arm in thy cause at Ronald's call,
And mine eye proves that knight unknown
And the brave Island lord are one.—
Had then his suit been earlier made,
In his own name, with thee to aid,
(But that his plighted faith forbade,)
I know not———But thy page so near?—
This is no tale for menial's ear."—

XXVI.

Still stood that page, as far apart
As the small cell would space afford;
With dizzy eye and bursting heart,
He leaned his weight on Bruce's sword,
The monarch's mantle too he bore,
And drew the fold his visage o'er.
"Fear not for him—in murderous strife,"
Said Bruce, "his warning saved my life:
Full seldom parts he from my side;
And in his silence I confide,
Since he can tell no tale again.—
He is a boy of gentle strain,
And I have purposed he shall dwell
In Augustin the chaplain's cell,
And wait on thee, my Isabel.—
Mind not his tears; I've seen them flow,
As in the thaw dissolves the snow.
'Tis a kind youth, but fanciful,
Unfit against the tide to pull,
And those that with the Bruce would sail,
Must learn to strive with stream and gale.—
But forward, gentle Isabel—
My answer for lord Ronald tell."—

XXVII.

"This answer be to Ronald given—
The heart he asks is fixed on heaven.

My love was like a summer flower,
That withered in the wintry hour,
Born but of vanity and pride,
And with these sunny visions died.
If further press his suit—then say,
He should his plighted troth obey;
Troth plighted both with ring and word,
And sworn on crucifix and sword.—
Oh, shame thee, Robert! I have seen
Thou hast a woman's guardian been:
E'en in extremity's dread hour,
When pressed on thee the southern power,
And safety, to all human sight,
Was only found in rapid flight,
Thou heard'st a wretched female plain
In agony of travail-pain,
And thou didst bid thy little band
Upon the instant turn and stand,[12]
And dare the worst the foe might do,
Rather than, like a knight untrue,
Leave to pursuers merciless
A woman in her last distress.—
And wilt thou now deny thine aid
To an oppressed and injured maid,
E'en plead for Ronald's perfidy,
And press his fickle faith on me?—
So witness heaven, as true I vow,
Had I those earthly feelings now,
Which could my former bosom move
Ere taught to set its hopes above,
I'd spurn each proffer he could bring,
Till at my feet he laid the ring,
The ring and spousal contract both,
And fair acquittal of his oath,
By her who brooks his perjured scorn,
The ill-requited maid of Lorn!"—

XXVIII.

With sudden impulse forward sprung
The page, and on her neck he hung;
Then, recollected instantly,
His head he stooped, and bent his knee,
Kissed twice the hand of Isabel,
Arose, and sudden left the cell.—
The princess, loosened from his hold,
Blushed angry at his bearing bold;
But good king Robert cried,
"Chafe not—by signs he speaks his mind,
He heard the plan my care designed,
Nor could his transports hide.—
But, sister, now bethink thee well;
No easy choice the convent cell;
Trust, I shall play no tyrant part,
Either to force thy hand or heart,
Or suffer that lord Ronald scorn,
Or wrong for thee, the maid of Lorn.
But think,—not long the time has been,
That thou wert wont to sigh unseen,
And would'st the ditties best approve,
That told some lay of hapless love.
Now are thy wishes in thy power,
And thou art bent on cloister bower!
O! if our Edward knew the change,
How would his busy satire range,
With many a sarcasm varied still
On woman's wish, and woman's will!"

XXIX.

"Brother, I well believe," she said,
"E'en so would Edward's part be played.
Kindly in heart, in word severe,
A foe to thought, and grief, and fear,
He holds his humour uncontrolled;
But thou art of another mould.
Say then to Ronald, as I say,
Unless before my feet he lay
The ring which bound the faith he swore,
By Edith freely yielded o'er,
He moves his suit to me no more.
Nor do I promise, e'en if now
He stood absolved of spousal vow,
That I would change my purpose made,
To shelter me in holy shade.—
Brother, for little space, farewell!
To other duties warns the bell."

XXX.

"Lost to the world," king Robert said,
When he had left the royal maid,
"Lost to the world by lot severe,
O what a gem lies buried here,
Nipped by misfortune's cruel frost,
The buds of fair affection lost!
But what have I with love to do?
Far sterner cares my lot pursue.
—Pent in this isle we may not lie,
Nor would it long our wants supply.
Right opposite, the mainland towers
Of my own Turnberry court our powers—
—Might not my father's beadsman hoar,
Cuthbert, who dwells upon the shore,
Kindle a signal-flame, to show
The time propitious for the blow!—
It shall be so—some friend shall bear
Our mandate with dispatch and care;
Edward shall find the messenger.
That fortress ours, the island fleet
May on the coast of Carrick meet.
O Scotland! shall it e'er be mine
To wreak thy wrongs in battle line,
To raise my victor head, and see
Thy hills, thy dales, thy people free,—
That glance of bliss is all I crave,
Betwixt my labours and my grave!"
Then down the hill he slowly went,
Oft pausing on the steep descent,
And reached the spot where his bold train
Held rustic camp upon the plain.

CANTO V.

I.

On fair Loch-Ranza streamed the early day,
Thin wreaths of cottage-smoke are upward curled
From the lone hamlet, which her inland bay
And circling mountains sever from the world.
And there the fisherman his sail unfurled,
The goat-herd drove his kids to steep Ben-ghoil,
Before the hut the dame her spindle twirled,
Courting the sunbeam as she plied her toil,—
For, wake where'er he may, man wakes to care and toil.

But other duties called each convent maid,
Roused by the summons of the moss-grown bell;
Sung were the matins, and the mass was said,
And every sister sought her separate cell,
Such was the rule, her rosary to tell.
And Isabel has knelt in lonely prayer;
The sunbeam, through the narrow lattice, fell
Upon the snowy neck and long dark hair,
As stooped her gentle head in meek devotion there.

II.

She raised her eyes, that duty done,
When glanced upon the pavement stone,
Gemmed and enchased, a golden ring,
Bound to a scroll with silken string,
With few brief words inscribed to tell,
"This for the lady Isabel."

Within, the writing farther bore,—
"'Twas with this ring his plight he swore,
With this his promise I restore;
To her who can the heart command,
Well may I yield the plighted hand.
And O! for better fortune born,
Grudge not a passing sigh to mourn
Her who was Edith once of Lorn!"
One single flash of glad surprise
Just glanced from Isabel's dark eyes,
But vanished in the blush of shame,
That, as its penance, instant came.
"O thought unworthy of my race!
Selfish, ungenerous, mean, and base,
A moment's throb of joy to own,
That rose upon her hopes o'erthrown!—
Thou pledge of vows too well believed,
Of man ingrate and maid deceived,
Think not thy lustre here shall gain
Another heart to hope in vain!
For thou shalt rest, thou tempting gaud,
Where worldly thoughts are overawed,
And worldly splendours sink debased."—
Then by the cross the ring she placed.

III.

Next rose the thought,—its owner far,
How came it here through bolt and bar?—
But the dim lattice is a-jar—
She looks abroad—the morning dew
A light short step had brushed anew,
And there were foot-prints seen
On the carved buttress rising still,
Till on the mossy window-sill
Their track effaced the green.
The ivy twigs were torn and frayed,
As if some climber's steps to aid.—
But who the hardy messenger
Whose venturous path these signs infer?—
"Strange doubts are mine!—Mona, draw nigh;"
—Nought 'scapes old Mona's curious eye—
"What strangers, gentle mother, say,
Have sought these holy walls to-day?"
"None, lady, none of note or name,
Only your brother's foot-page came,
At peep of dawn—I prayed him pass
To chapel where they said the mass;
But like an arrow he shot by,
And tears seemed bursting from his eye."

IV.

The truth at once on Isabel,
As darted by a sunbeam, fell.
"'Tis Edith's self!—her speechless wo,
Her form, her looks, the secret show!
—Instant, good Mona, to the bay,
And to my royal brother say,
I do conjure him seek my cell,
With that mute page he loves so well."
"What! know'st thou not his warlike host
At break of day has left our coast?
My old eyes saw them from the tower.
At eve they couched in green-wood bower,
At dawn a bugle-signal, made
By their bold lord, their ranks arrayed;
Up sprung the spears through bush and tree,
No time for benedicite!
Like deer, that, rousing from their lair,
Just shake the dew-drops from their hair,
And toss their armed crests aloft,
Such matins theirs!"—"Good mother, soft—
Where does my brother bend his way?"
"As I have heard, for Brodick-bay,
Across the isle—of barks a score
Lie there, 'tis said, to waft them o'er,
On sudden news, to Carrick-shore."
"If such their purpose, deep the need,"
Said anxious Isabel, "of speed!
Call father Augustin, good dame."
The nun obeyed, the father came.

V.

"Kind father, hie without delay,
Across the hill to Brodick-bay!
This message to the Bruce be given;
I pray him, by his hopes of heaven,
That, till he speak with me, he stay!
Or, if his haste brook no delay,
That he deliver, on my suit,
Into thy charge that stripling mute.
Thus prays his sister Isabel,
For causes more than she may tell—
Away, good father!—and take heed,
That life and death are on thy speed."—
His cowl the good old priest did on,
Took his piked staff and sandalled shoon,
And, like a palmer bent by eld,
O'er moss and moor his journey held.

VI.

Heavy and dull the foot of age,
And rugged was the pilgrimage;
But none was there beside, whose care
Might such important message bear.
Through birchen copse he wandered slow,
Stunted and sapless, thin and low;
By many a mountain stream he passed,
From the tall cliffs in tumult cast,
Dashing to foam their waters dun,
And sparkling in the summer sun.
Round his gray head the wild curlew
In many a fearless circle flew.
O'er chasms he passed, where fractures wide
Craved wary eye and ample stride;[1]
He crossed his brow beside the stone,
Where druids erst heard victims groan,
And at the cairns upon the wild,
O'er many a heathen hero piled,[2]
He breathed a timid prayer for those
Who died ere Shiloh's sun arose.
Beside Macfarlane's cross he staid,
There told his hours within the shade,
And at the stream his thirst allayed.
Thence onward journeying slowly still,
As evening closed he reached the hill,
Where rising through the woodland green,
Old Brodick's gothic towers were seen.
From Hastings, late their English lord,
Douglas had won them by the sword.[3]
The sun that sunk behind the isle
Now tinged them with a parting smile.

VII.

But though the beams of light decay,
'Twas bustle all in Brodick-bay.
The Bruce's followers crowd the shore,
And boats and barges some unmoor,
Some raise the sail, some seize the oar;
Their eyes oft turned where glimmered far
What might have seemed an early star
On heaven's blue arch, save that its light
Was all too flickering, fierce and bright.
Far distant in the south, the ray
Shone pale amid retiring day,
But as, on Carrick shore,
Dim seen in outline faintly blue,
The shades of evening closer drew,
It kindled more and more.

The monk's slow steps now press the sands,
And now amid a scene he stands,
Full strange to churchman's eye;
Warriors, who, arming for the fight,
Rivet and clasp their harness light,
And twinkling spears, and axes bright,
And helmets flashing high;
Oft, too, with unaccustomed ears,
A language much unmeet he hears,[4]
While hastening all on board,
As stormy as the swelling surge
That mixed its roar, the leaders urge
Their followers to the ocean verge,
With many a haughty word.

VIII.

Through that wild throng the father passed,
And reached the royal Bruce at last.
He leant against a stranded boat,
That the approaching tide must float,
And counted every rippling wave,
As higher yet her sides they lave,
And oft the distant fire he eyed,
And closer yet his hauberk tied,
And loosened in its sheath his brand.
Edward and Lennox were at hand;
Douglas and Ronald had the care
The soldiers to the barks to share.—
The monk approached and homage paid;
"And art thou come," king Robert said,
"So far, to bless us ere we part?"—
—"My liege, and with a loyal heart!—
But other charge I have to tell,"—
And spoke the hest of Isabel.
—"Now, by saint Giles," the monarch cried,
"This moves me much!—this morning tide,
I sent the stripling to saint Bride,
With my commandment there to bide."—
—"Thither he came the portress showed,
But there, my liege, made brief abode."—

IX.

"'Twas I," said Edward, "found employ
Of nobler import for the boy.
Deep pondering in my anxious mind,
A fitting messenger to find,
To bear thy written mandate o'er
To Cuthbert on the Carrick shore,
I chanced, at early dawn, to pass
The chapel gate to snatch a mass.
I found the stripling on a tomb
Low-seated, weeping for the doom
That gave his youth to convent gloom.
I told my purpose, and his eyes
Flashed joyful at the glad surprise.
He bounded to the skiff, the sail
Was spread before a prosperous gale,
And well my charge he hath obeyed;
For, see! the ruddy signal made,
That Clifford, with his merry-men all,
Guards carelessly our father's hall."[5]

X.

"O wild of thought, and hard of heart!"
Answered the monarch, "on a part
Of such deep danger to employ
A mute, an orphan, and a boy!
Unfit for flight, unfit for strife,
Without a tongue to plead for life!
Now, were my right restored by heaven,
Edward, my crown I would have given,
Ere, thrust on such adventure wild,
I periled thus the helpless child."
—Offended half, and half submiss,
"Brother and liege, of blame like this,"
Edward replied, "I little dreamed.
A stranger messenger, I deemed,
Might safest seek the beadsman's cell,
Where all thy squires are known so well.
Noteless his presence, sharp his sense,
His imperfection his defence.
If seen, none can his errand guess;
If ta'en, his words no tale express—
Methinks, too, yonder beacon's shine
Might expiate greater fault than mine."—
"Rash," said king Robert, "was the deed—
But it is done.—Embark with speed!—
Good father, say to Isabel
How this unhappy chance befel;
If well we thrive on yonder shore,
Soon shall my care her page restore.
Our greeting to our sister bear,
And think of us in mass and prayer."—

XI.

"Ay!" said the priest, "while this poor hand
Can chalice raise or cross command,
While my old voice has accents' use,
Can Augustin forget the Bruce?"—
Then to his side lord Ronald pressed,
And whispered, "Bear thou this request,
That when by Bruce's side I fight,
For Scotland's crown and freedom's right,
The princess grace her knight to bear
Some token of her favouring care;
It shall be shown where England's best
May shrink to see it on my crest.
And for the boy—since weightier care
For royal Bruce the times prepare,
The helpless youth is Ronald's charge,
His couch my plaid, his fence my targe."—
He ceased; for many an eager hand
Had urged the barges from the strand.
Their number was a score and ten,
They bore thrice three score chosen men.
With such small force did Bruce at last
The die for death or empire cast!

XII.

Now on the darkening main afloat,
Ready and manned rocks every boat;
Beneath their oars the ocean's might
Was dashed to sparks of glimmering light.
Faint and more faint, as off they bore,
Their armour glanced against the shore,
And, mingled with the dashing tide,
Their murmuring voices distant died.—
"God speed them!" said the priest, as dark
On distant billows glides each bark:
"O heaven! when swords for freedom shine,
And monarch's right, the cause is thine!
Edge doubly every patriot blow!
Beat down the banners of the foe!
And be it to the nations known,
That victory is from God alone!"—
As up the hill his path he drew,
He turned, his blessings to renew,
Oft turned, till on the darkened coast
All traces of their course were lost;
Then slowly bent to Brodick tower,
To shelter for the evening hour.

XIII.

In night the fairy prospects sink,
Where Cumray's isles with verdant link
Close the fair entrance of the Clyde;
The woods of Bute no more descried

Are gone—and on the placid sea
The rowers plied their task with glee,
While hands that knightly lances bore
Impatient aid the labouring oar.
The half faced moon shone dim and pale,
And glanced against the whitened sail;
But on that ruddy beacon light
Each steersman kept the helm aright,
And oft, for such the king's command,
That all at once might reach the strand,
From boat to boat loud shout and hail
Warned them to crowd or slacken sail.
South and by west the armada bore,
And near at length the Carrick shore.
As less and less the distance grows,
High and more high the beacon rose;
The light, that seemed a twinkling star,
Now blazed portentous, fierce, and far.
Dark-red the heaven above it glowed,
Dark-red the sea beneath it flowed,
Red rose the rocks on ocean's brim,
In blood-red light her islets swim;
Wild scream the dazzled sea-fowl gave,
Dropped from their crags on plashing wave,
The deer to distant covert drew,
The black-cock deemed it day, and crew.
Like some tall castle given to flame,
O'er half the land the lustre came.
"Now, good my liege, and brother sage,
What think ye of mine elfin page?"
"Row on!" the noble king replied,
"We'll learn the truth whate'er betide;
Yet sure the beadsman and the child
Could ne'er have waked that beacon wild."—

XIV.

With that the boats approached the land,
But Edward's grounded on the sand;
The eager knight leaped in the sea
Waist deep, and first on shore was he,
Though every barge's hardy band
Contended which should gain the land,
When that strange light, which, seen afar,
Seemed steady as the polar star,
Now, like a prophet's fiery chair,
Seemed travelling the realms of air.
Wide o'er the sky the splendour glows
As that portentous meteor rose;
Helm, axe, and falchion, glittered bright,
And in the red and dusky light
His comrade's face each warrior saw,
Nor marvelled it was pale with awe.
Then high in air the beams were lost,
And darkness sunk upon the coast.—
Ronald to heaven a prayer addressed,
And Douglas crossed his dauntless breast;
"Saint James protect us!" Lennox cried,
But reckless Edward spoke aside,
"Deemest thou, Kirkpatrick, in that flame
Red Comyn's angry spirit came,
Or would thy dauntless heart endure
Once more to make assurance sure?"
"Hush!" said the Bruce, "we soon shall know,
If this be sorcerer's empty show,
Or stratagem of southern foe.
The moon shines out—upon the sand
Let every leader rank his band."—

XV.

Faintly the moon's pale beams supply
That ruddy light's unnatural die;
The dubious cold reflection lay
On the wet sands and quiet bay.
Beneath the rocks king Robert drew
His scattered files to order due,
Till shield compact and serried spear
In the cool light shone blue and clear.
Then down a path that sought the tide,
That speechless page was seen to glide;
He knelt him lowly on the sand,
And gave a scroll to Robert's hand.
"A torch," the monarch cried; "What, ho!
Now shall we Cuthbert's tidings know."—
But evil news the letters bare,
The Clifford's force was strong and ware,
Augmented, too, that very morn,
By mountaineers who came with Lorn.
Long harrowed by oppressor's hand,
Courage and faith had fled the land,
And over Carrick, dark and deep,
Had sunk dejection's iron sleep.—
Cuthbert had seen that beacon flame,
Unwitting from what source it came.
Doubtful of perilous event,
Edward's mute messenger he sent,
If Bruce deceived should venture o'er,
To warn him from the fatal shore.

XVI.

As round the torch the leaders crowd,
Bruce read these chilling news aloud.
"What council, nobles, have we now?
To ambush us in green-wood bough,
And take the chance which fate may send
To bring our enterprise to end;
Or shall we turn us to the main
As exiles, and embark again?"
Answered fierce Edward, "Hap what may,
In Carrick, Carrick's lord must stay.
I would not minstrels told the tale,
Wild-fire or meteor made us quail."
Answered the Douglas, "If my liege
May win you walls by storm or siege,
Then were each brave and patriot heart
Kindled of new for loyal part."
Answered lord Ronald, "Not for shame,
Would I that aged Torquil came,
And found, for all our empty boast,
Without a blow we fled the coast.
I will not credit that this land,
So famed for warlike heart and hand,
The nurse of Wallace and of Bruce,
Will long with tyrants hold a truce."
"Prove we our fate—the brunt we'll bide!"
So Boyd and Haye and Lennox cried;
So said, so vowed, the leaders all;
So Bruce resolved; "And in my hall
Since the bold southern make their home,
The hour of payment soon shall come,
When with a rough and rugged host
Clifford may reckon to his cost.
Meantime, through well-known bosk and dell,
I'll lead where we may shelter well."

XVII.

Now ask you whence that wond'rous light,
Whose fairy glow beguiled their sight?
It ne'er was known—yet gray-haired eld
A superstitious credence held,
That never did a mortal hand
Wake its broad glare on Carrick strand:
Nay, and that on the self-same night
When Bruce crossed o'er, still gleams the light.
Yearly it gleams o'er mount and moor,
And glittering wave and crimsoned shore
But whether beam celestial, lent
By heaven to aid the king's descent,

Or fire hell-kindled from beneath,
To lure him to defeat and death,
Or were it but some meteor strange,
Of such as oft through midnight range,
Startling the traveller late and lone,
I know not—and it ne'er was known.

XVIII.

Now up the rocky pass they drew,
And Ronald, to his promise true,
Still made his arm the stripling's stay,
To aid him on the rugged way.
"Now cheer thee, simple Amadine!
Why throbs that silly heart of thine?"—
—That name the pirates to their slave,
(In Gælic 'tis the changeling) gave—
"Dost thou not rest thee on my arm?
Do not my plaid-folds hold thee warm?
Hath not the wild bull's treble hide
This targe for thee and me supplied?
Is not Clan-Colla's sword of steel?
And, trembler, can'st thou terror feel?
Cheer thee, and still that throbbing heart;
From Ronald's guard thou shalt not part."—
—O! many a shaft, at random sent,
Finds mark the archer little meant!
And many a word, at random spoken,
May sooth or wound a heart that's broken!
Half soothed, half grieved, half terrified,
Close drew the page to Ronald's side;
A wild delirious thrill of joy
Was in that hour of agony,
As up the steepy pass he strove,
Fear, toil, and sorrow, lost in love!

XIX.

The barrier of that iron shore,
The rock's steep ledge, is now climbed o'er;
And from the castle's distant wall,
From tower to tower the warders call:
The sound swings over land and sea,
And marks a watchful enemy.—
They gained the chase, a wide domain
Left for the castle's sylvan reign,[7]
(Seek not the scene—the axe, the plough,
The boor's dull fence, have marred it now,)
But then, soft swept in velvet green
The plain with many a glade between,
Whose tangled alleys far invade
The depth of the brown forest shade.
Here the tall fern obscured the lawn,
Fair shelter for the sportive faun;
There, tufted close with copse-wood green,
Was many a swelling hillock seen;
And all around was verdure meet
For pressure of the fairies' feet.
The glossy holly loved the park,
The yew-tree lent its shadow dark,
And many an old oak, worn and bare,
With all its shivered boughs, was there.
Lovely between, the moonbeams fell
On lawn and hillock, glade and dell.
The gallant monarch sighed to see
Those glades so loved in childhood free,
Bethinking that, as outlaw now,
He ranged beneath the forest bough.

XX.

Fast o'er the moonlight chase they sped.
Well knew the band that measured tread,
When in retreat or in advance,
The serried warriors move at once;
And evil were the luck, if dawn
Descried them on the open lawn.
Copses they traverse, brooks they cross,
Strain up the bank and o'er the moss.
From the exhausted page's brow
Cold drops of toil are streaming now;
With effort faint and lengthened pause,
His weary step the stripling draws.
"Nay, droop not yet!" the warrior said;
"Come, let me give thee ease and aid!
Strong are mine arms, and little care
A weight so slight as thine to bear.
What! wilt thou not?—capricious boy!
Then thine own limbs and strength employ.
Pass but this night, and pass thy care,
I'll place thee with a lady fair,
Where thou shalt tune thy lute to tell
How Ronald loves fair Isabel!"
Worn out, disheartened, and dismayed,
Here Amadine let go the plaid;
His trembling limbs their aid refuse,
He sunk among the midnight dews!

XXI.

What may be done?—the night is gone—
The Bruce's band moves swiftly on—
Eternal shame, if at the brunt
Lord Ronald grace not battle's front!
"See yonder oak, within whose trunk
Decay a darkened cell hath sunk;
Enter, and rest thee there a space,
Wrap in my plaid thy limbs, thy face.
I will not be, believe me, far;
But must not quit the ranks of war.
Well will I mark the bosky bourne,
And soon to guard thee hence, return.
Nay, weep not so, thou simple boy!
But sleep in peace, and wake in joy."
In sylvan lodging close bestowed,
He placed the page, and onward strode
With strength put forth, o'er moss and brook,
And soon the marching band o'ertook.

XXII.

Thus strangely left, long sobbed and wept
The page, till, wearied out, he slept.
A rough voice waked his dream—"Nay, here,
Here by this thicket, passed the deer—
Beneath that oak old Ryno staid—
What have we here?—a Scottish plaid,
And in its folds a stripling laid?
Come forth! thy name and business tell!
What, silent?—then I guess thee well,
The spy that sought old Cuthbert's cell,
Wafted from Annan yester morn—
Come, comrades, we will straight return.
Our lord may choose the rack should teach
To this young lurcher use of speech.
Thy bow-string, till I bind him fast.'
"Nay, but he weeps and stands aghast;
Unbound we'll lead him, fear it not;
'Tis a fair stripling, though a Scot."
The hunters to the castle sped,
And there the hapless captive led.

XXIII.

Stout Clifford in the castle-court
Prepared him for the morning sport;
And now with Lorn held deep discourse,
Now gave command for hound and horse.
War-steeds and palfreys pawed the ground,
And many a deer-dog howled around.
To Amadine, Lorn's well-known word
Replying to that southern lord,
Mixed with this clanging din, might seem
The phantasm of a fevered dream.

The tone upon his ringing ears
Came like the sounds which fancy hears,
When in rude waves or roaring winds
Some words of wo the muser finds,
Until more loudly and more near,
Their speech arrests the page's ear.

XXIV.

"And was she thus," said Clifford, "lost?
The priest will rue it to his cost!
What says the monk?"—"The holy sire
Owns that, in masquer's quaint attire,
She sought his skiff, disguised, unknown
To all except to him alone.
But, says the priest, a bark from Lorn
Laid them aboard that very morn,
And pirates siezed her for their prey.
He proffered ransom-gold to pay,
And they agreed—but ere told o'er,
The winds blow loud, the billows roar;
They severed, and they met no more.
He deems—such tempest vexed the coast—
Ship, crew, and fugitive, were lost.
—So let it be, with the disgrace
And scandal of her lofty race!
Thrice better she had ne'er been born,
Than brought her infamy on Lorn!"

XXV.

Lord Clifford now the captive spied;—
"Whom, Herbert, hast thou there?" he cried.
"A spy was siezed within the chase,
An hollow oak his lurking place."—
"What tidings can the youth afford?"—
"He plays the mute."—"Then noose a cord—
Unless brave Lorn reverse the doom
For his plaid's sake."—"Clan-Colla's loom,"
Said Lorn, whose careless glances trace
Rather the vesture than the face,
"Clan-Colla's dames such tartans twine;
Wearer nor plaid claims care of mine.
Give him, if my advice you crave,
His own seathed oak: and let him wave
In air, unless, by terror wrung,
A frank confession find his tongue—
Nor shall he die without his rite;
—Thou, Angus Roy, attend the sight,
And give Clan-Colla's dirge thy breath,
As they convey him to his death."
"O brother! cruel to the last!"
Through the poor captive's bosom passed
The thought, but, to his purpose true,
He said not, though he sighed, "Adieu!"—

XXVI.

And will he keep his purpose still,
In sight of that last closing ill,
When one poor breath, one single word,
May freedom, safety, life, afford?
Can he resist the instinctive call,
For life, that bids us barter all?—
Love, strong as death, his heart hath steeled,
His nerves hath strung—he will not yield!
Since that poor breath, that little word,
May yield lord Ronald to the sword.—
Clan-Colla's dirge is pealing wide,
The griesly headsman's by his side;
Along the green wood chase they bend,
And now their march has ghastly end!
That old and shattered oak beneath,
They destine for the place of death.
—What thoughts are his, while all in vain
His eye for aid explores the plain?
What thoughts, while, with a dizzy ear,
He hears the death-prayer muttered near?
And must he die such death accurst,
Or will that bosom-secret burst?
Cold on his brow breaks terror's dew,
His trembling lips are livid blue;
The agony of parting life
Has nought to match that moment's strife!

XXVII.

But other witnesses are nigh,
Who mock at fear, and death defy!
Soon as the dire lament was played,
It waked the lurking ambuscade.
The Island lord looked forth, and spied
The cause, and loud in fury cried,
"By heaven they lead the page to die,
And mock me in his agony!
They shall abye it!"—On his arm
Bruce laid strong grasp, "They shall not harm
A ringlet of the stripling's hair;
But, till I give the word, forbear.
—Douglas, lead fifty of our force
Up yonder hollow water-course,
And couch thee midway on the wold,
Between the flyers and their hold:
A spear above the copse displayed,
Be signal of the ambush made.
—Edward, with forty spearmen, straight
Through yonder copse approach the gate,
And, when thou hearest the battle din,
Rush forward, and the passage win,
Secure the drawbridge—storm the port—
And man and guard the castle-court.—
The rest move slowly forth with me,
In shelter of the forest tree,
Till Douglas at his post I see."

XXVIII.

Like war-horse eager to rush on,
Compelled to wait the signal blown,
Hid, and scarce hid, by green-wood bough,
Trembling with rage, stands Ronald now,
And in his grasp his sword gleams blue,
Soon to be dyed with deadlier hue.—
Meanwhile the Bruce, with steady eye,
Sees the dark death-train moving by,
And heedful measures oft the space,
The Douglas and his band must trace,
Ere they can reach their destined ground.
Now sinks the dirge's wailing sound,
Now cluster round the direful tree
That slow and solemn company,
While hymn mistuned and muttered prayer
The victim for his fate prepare.—
What glances o'er the green-wood shade?
The spear that marks the ambuscade!—
"Now, noble chief! I leave thee loose;
Upon them, Ronald," said the Bruce.

XXIX.

"The Bruce, the Bruce!" to well-known cry
His native rocks and woods reply.
"The Bruce, the Bruce!" in that dread word
The knell of hundred deaths was heard.
The astonished southern gazed at first,
Where the wild tempest was to burst,
That waked in that presaging name!
Before, behind, around it came!
Half-armed, surprised, on every side
Hemmed in, hewed down, they bled and died.
Deep in the ring the Bruce engaged,
And fierce Clan-Colla's broadsword raged!

Full soon the few who fought were sped,
Nor better was their lot who fled,
And met, 'mid terror's wild career,
The Douglas's redoubted spear!
Two hundred yeomen on that morn
The castle left, and none return.

XXX.

Not on their flight pressed Ronald's brand,
A gentler duty claimed his hand.
He raised the page, where on the plain
His fear had sunk him with the slain:
And, twice that morn, surprise well near
Betrayed the secret kept by fear.
Once, when, with life returning, came
To the boy's lip lord Ronald's name,
And hardly recollection drowned
The accents in a murmuring sound:
And once, when scarce he could resist
The chieftain's care to loose the vest,
Drawn tightly o'er his labouring breast.
But then the Bruce's bugle blew,
For martial work was yet to do.

XXXI.

A harder task fierce Edward waits.
Ere signal given, the castle gates
His fury had assailed;
Such was his wonted reckless mood,
Yet desperate valour oft made good,
E'en by its daring, venture rude,
Where prudence might have failed.
Upon the bridge his strength he threw,
And struck the iron chain in two
By which its planks arose;
The warder next his axe's edge
Struck down upon the threshold ledge,
'Twixt door and post a ghastly wedge!
The gate they may not close.
Well fought the southern in the fray,
Clifford and Lorn fought well that day,
But stubborn Edward forced his way
Against an hundred foes.
Loud came the cry, "The Bruce, The Bruce!'
No hope or in defence or truce,
Fresh combatants pour in;
Mad with success, and drunk with gore,
They drive the struggling foe before,
And ward on ward they win.
Unsparing was the vengeful sword,
And limbs were lopped and life-blood poured,
The cry of death and conflict roared,
And fearful was the din!
The startling horses plunged and flung,
Clamoured the dogs till turrets rung,
Nor sunk the fearful cry,
Till not a foeman was there found
Alive, save those who on the ground
Groaned in their agony!

XXXII.

The valiant Clifford is no more;
On Ronald's broadsword streamed his gore,
But better hap had he of Lorn,
Who, by the foemen backward borne,
Yet gained with slender train the port,
Where lay his bark beneath the fort,
And cut the cable loose.
Short were his shrift in that debate,
That hour of fury and of fate,
If Lorn encountered Bruce!
Then long and loud the victor shout
From turret and from tower rung out,
The rugged vaults replied;
And from the donjon tower on high,
The men of Carrick may descry
Saint Andrew's cross, in blazonry
Of silver, waving wide!

XXXIII.

The Bruce hath won his fathers' hall![8]
—"Welcome, brave friends and comrades all,
Welcome to mirth and joy!
The first, the last, is welcome here,
From lord and chieftain, prince and peer,
To this poor speechless boy.
Great God! once more my sire's abode
Is mine—behold the floor I trode
In tottering infancy!
And there the vaulted arch, whose sound
Echoed my joyous shout and bound
In boyhood, and that rung around
To youth's unthinking glee!
O first, to thee, all gracious heaven,
Then to my friends, my thanks be given!"
He paused a space, his brow he crossed—
Then on the board his sword he tossed,
Yet streaming hot; with southern gore
From hilt to point 'twas crimsoned o'er.

XXXIV.

"Bring here," he said, "the mazers four,
My noble fathers loved of yore.[9]
Thrice let them circle round the board,
The pledge, 'fair Scotland's rights restored!'
And he whose lip shall touch the wine,
Without a vow as true as mine,
To hold both lands and life at nought,
Until her freedom shall be bought,—
Be brand of a disloyal Scot,
And lasting infamy his lot!
Sit, gentle friends! our hour of glee
Is brief, we'll spend it joyously!
Blithest of all the sun's bright beams,
When betwixt storm and storm he gleams.
Well is our country's work begun,
But more, far more, must yet be done!—
Speed messengers the country through;
Arouse old friends, and gather new;[10]
Warn Lanark's knights to gird their mail,
Rouse the brave sons of Teviotdale,
Let Ettrick's archers sharp their darts,
The fairest forms, the truest hearts![11]
Call all, call all! from Reedswair path,
To the wild confines of Cape-Wrath;
Wide let the news through Scotland ring,
The northern eagle claps his wing!"

CANTO VI.

I.

O who, that shared them, ever shall forget
The emotions of the spirit-rousing time,
When breathless in the mart the couriers met,
Early and late, at evening and at prime;
When the loud cannon and the merry chime
Hailed news on news, as field on field was won,
When hope, long doubtful, soared at length sublime,
And our glad eyes, awake as day begun,
Watched Joy's broad banner rise, to meet the rising sun!

O these were hours, when thrilling joy repaid
A long, long course of darkness, doubts, and fears!
The heart-sick faintness of the hope delayed,
The waste, the wo, the bloodshed, and the tears,

That tracked with terror twenty rolling years,
All was forgot in that blith jubilee!
Her downcast eye e'en pale Affliction rears,
To sigh a thankful prayer, amid the glee,
That hailed the despot's fall, and peace and liberty!

Such news o'er Scotland's hills triumphant rode,
When 'gainst the invaders turned the battle's scale,
When Bruce's banner had victorious flowed
O'er Loudoun's mountain, and in Ury's vale;[1]
When English blood oft deluged Douglas-dale,[2]
And fiery Edward routed stout St. John,[3]
When Randolph's war-cry swelled the southern gale,[4]
And many a fortress, town, and tower, was won,
And Fame still sounded forth fresh deeds of glory done.

II.

Blith tidings flew from baron's tower,
To peasant's cot, to forest-bower,
And waked the solitary cell,
Where lone saint Bride's recluses dwell.
Princess no more, fair Isabel,
A vot'ress of the order now,
Say, did the rule that bid thee wear
Dim veil and woollen scapulaire,
And reft thy locks of dark-brown hair,
That stern and rigid vow,
Did it condemn the transport high,
Which glistened in thy watery eye,
When minstrel or when palmer told
Each fresh exploit of Bruce the bold?—
And whose the lovely form, that shares
Thy anxious hopes, thy fears, thy prayers?
No sister she of convent shade;
So say these locks in lengthened braid,
So say the blushes and the sighs,
The tremors that unbidden rise,
When, mingled with the Bruce's fame,
The brave lord Ronald's praises came.

III.

Believe, his fathers' castle won,
And his bold enterprise begun,
That Bruce's earliest cares restore
The speechless page to Arran's shore;
Nor think that long the quaint disguise
Concealed her from a sister's eyes;
And sister-like in love they dwell
In that lone convent's silent cell.
There Bruce's slow assent allows
Fair Isabel the veil and vows:
And there, her sex's dress regained,
The lovely maid of Lorn remained,
Unnamed, unknown, while Scotland far
Resounded with the din of war;
And many a month and many a day,
In calm seclusion wore away.

IV.

These days, these months, to years had worn,
When tidings of high weight were borne
To that lone Island's shore;
Of all the Scottish conquests made
By the first Edward's ruthless blade,
His son retained no more,
Northward of Tweed, but Stirling's towers,
Beleaguered by king Robert's powers;
And they took term of truce,[5]
If England's king should not relieve
The siege ere John the Baptist's eve,
To yield them to the Bruce.

England was roused on every side,
Courier and post and herald hied,
To summon prince and peer,
At Berwick-bounds to meet their liege,[6]
Prepared to raise fair Stirling's siege,
With buckler, brand, and spear.
The term was nigh—they mustered fast,
By beacon and by bugle blast
Forth marshalled for the field;
There rode each knight of noble name,
There England's hardy archers came,
The land they trode seemed all on flame,
With banner, blade, and shield!
And not famed England's powers alone,
Renowned in arms, the summons own;
For Neustria's knights obeyed,
Gascoyne hath lent her horsemen good,
And Cambria, but of late subdued,
Sent forth her mountain-multitude,[7]
And Connaught poured from waste and wood
Her hundred tribes, whose sceptre rude
Dark Eth O'Conner swayed.[8]

V.

Right to devoted Caledon
The storm of war rolls slowly on,
With menace deep and dread;
So the dark clouds, with gathering power,
Suspend awhile the threatened shower,
Till every peak and summit lower
Round the pale pilgrim's head.
Not with such pilgrim's startled eye
King Robert marked the tempest nigh!
Resolved the brunt to bide,
His royal summons warned the land,
That all who owned their king's command
Should instant take the spear and brand,
To combat at his side.
O, who may tell the sons of fame,
That at king Robert's bidding came,
To battle for the right!
From Cheviot to the shores of Ross,
From Solway-Sands to Marshal's moss,
All bouned them for the fight.
Such news the royal courier tells,
Who came to rouse dark Arran's dells;
But farther tidings must the ear
Of Isabel in secret hear.
These in her cloister walk, next morn,
Thus shared she with the maid of Lorn.

VI.

"My Edith, can I tell how dear
Our intercourse of hearts sincere
Hath been to Isabel?—
Judge then the sorrow of my heart,
When I must say the words, we part!
The cheerless convent-cell
Was not, sweet maiden, made for thee;
Go thou where thy vocation free
On happier fortunes fell.
Nor, Edith, judge thyself betrayed,
Though Robert knows that Lorn's high maid
And his poor silent page were one.
Versed in the fickle heart of man,
Earnest and anxious hath he looked
How Ronald's heart the message brooked
That gave him, with her last farewell,
The charge of sister Isabel,
To think upon thy better right,
And keep the faith his promise plight.
Forgive him for thy sister's sake,
At first if vain repinings wake—
Long since that mood is gone:

Now dwells he on thy juster claims,
And oft his breach of faith he blames—
Forgive him for thine own!"—

VII.

"No! never to lord Ronald's bower
Will I again as paramour——"
"Nay, hush thee, too impatient maid,
Until my final tale be said!—
The good king Robert would engage
Edith once more his elfin page,
By her own heart, and her own eye,
Her lover's penitence to try—
Safe in his royal charge, and free,
Should such thy final purpose be,
Again unknown to seek the cell,
And live and die with Isabel."
Thus spoke the maid—king Robert's eye
Might have some glance of policy;
Dunstaffnage had the monarch ta'en,
And Lorn had owned king Robert's reign;
Her brother had to England fled,
And there in banishment was dead:
Ample, through exile, death, and flight,
O'er tower and land was Edith's right;
This ample right o'er tower and land
Were safe in Ronald's faithful hand.

VIII.

Embarrassed eye and blushing cheek,
Pleasure, and shame, and fear bespeak!
Yet much the reasoning Edith made;
"Her sister's faith she must upbraid,
Who gave such secret, dark and dear,
In council to another's ear.
Why should she leave the peaceful cell?
How should she part with Isabel?
How wear that strange attire agen?
How risk herself 'midst martial men?
And how be guarded on the way?
At least she might entreat delay."
Kind Isabel, with secret smile,
Saw and forgave the maiden's wile,
Reluctant to be thought to move
At the first call of truant love.

IX.

Oh, blame her not!—when zephyrs wake,
The aspen's trembling leaves must shake;
When beams the sun through April's shower,
It needs must bloom, the violet flower;
And love, howe'er the maiden strive,
Must with reviving hope revive!
A thousand soft excuses came,
To plead his cause 'gainst virgin shame.
Pledged by their sires in earliest youth,
He had her plighted faith and truth—
Then, 'twas her liege's strict command,
And she, beneath his royal hand,
A ward in person and in land:
And, last, she was resolved to stay
Only brief space—one little day—
Close hidden in her safe disguise
From all, but most from Ronald's eyes—
But once to see him more!—nor blame
Her wish—to hear him name her name!
Then, to bear back to solitude
The thought, he had his falsehood rued!
But Isabel, who long had seen
Her pallid cheek and pensive mien,
And well herself the cause might know,
Though innocent, of Edith's wo,
Joyed, generous, that revolving time
Gave means to expiate the crime.

High glowed her bosom as she said,
"Well shall her sufferings be repaid!"
Now came the parting hour—a band
From Arran's mountains left the land;
Their chief, Fitz-Louis,[9] had the care
The speechless Amadine to bear
To Bruce, with honour, as beloved
To page the monarch dearly loved.

X.

The king had deemed the maiden bright
Should reach him long before the fight,
But storms and fate her course delay:
It was on eve of battle-day,
When o'er the Gillie's hill she rode.
The landscape like a furnace glowed,
And far as e'er the eye was borne,
The lances waved like autumn corn.
In battles four beneath their eye,
The forces of king Robert lie.[10]
And one below the hill was laid,
Reserved for rescue and for aid;
And three, advanced, formed va'ward line,
'Twixt Bannock's brook and Ninian's shrine.
Detached was each, yet each so nigh
As well might mutual aid supply.
Beyond, the southern host appears,[11]
A boundless wilderness of spears,
Whose verge or rear the anxious eye
Strove far, but strove in vain, to spy.
Thick flashing in the evening beam,
Glaives, lances, bills, and banners gleam;
And where the heaven joined with the hill,
Was distant armour flashing still,
So wide, so far, the boundless host
Seemed in the blue horizon lost.

XI.

Down from the hill the maiden passed,
At the wild show of war aghast;
And traversed first the rearward host,
Reserved for aid where needed most.
The men of Carrick and of Ayr,
Lennox and Lanark too, were there,
And all the western land;
With these the valiant of the Isles
Beneath their chieftains ranked their files[21],
In many a plaided band.
There, in the centre, proudly raised,
The Bruce's royal standard blazed,
And there lord Ronald's banner bore
A galley driven by sail and oar.
A wild, yet pleasing contrast, made
Warriors in mail and plate arrayed,
With the plumed bonnet and the plaid
By these Hebrideans worn;
But O! unseen for three long years,
Dear was the garb of mountaineers
To the fair maid of Lorn!
For one she looked—but he was far
Busied amid the ranks of war—
Yet with affection's troubled eye
She marked his banner boldly fly,
Gave on the countless foe a glance,
And thought on battle's desperate chance.

XII.

To centre of the va'ward line
Fitz-Louis guided Amadine.
Armed all on foot, that host appears
A serried mass of glimmering spears.
There stood the Marcher's warlike band,
The warriors there of Lodon's land:
Ettrick and Liddel bent the yew,
A band of archers fierce though few;

The men of Nith and Annan's vale,
And the bold spears of Teviotdale;—
The dauntless Douglas these obey,
And the young Stuart's gentle sway.
North-eastward by saint Ninian's shrine,
Beneath fierce Randolph's charge, combine
The warriors whom the hardy north
From Tay to Sutherland sent forth.
The rest of Scotland's war array
With Edward Bruce to westward lay,
Where Bannock, with his broken bank
And deep ravine, protects their flank:
Behind them, screened by sheltering wood,
The gallant Keith, lord-marshal, stood;
His men-at-arms bear mace and lance,
And plumes that wave, and helms that glance.
Thus fair divided by the king,
Centre, and right, and left-ward wing,
Composed his front; nor distant far
Was strong reserve to aid the war.
And 'twas to front of this array,
Her guide and Edith made their way.

XIII.

Here must they pause; for, in advance,
As far as one might pitch a lance,
The monarch rode along the van,[13]
The foe's approaching force to scan,
His line to marshal and to range,
And ranks to square, and fronts to change.
Alone he rode—from head to heel
Sheathed in his ready arms of steel;
Nor mounted yet on war-horse wight,
But, till more near the shock of fight,
Reining a palfrey low and light.
A diadem of gold was set
Above his bright steel bassinet,
And clasped within its glittering twine
Was seen the glove of Argentine:
Truncheon or leading staff he lacks,
Bearing, instead, a battle-axe.
He ranged his soldiers for the fight,
Accoutred thus, in open sight
Of either host.---Three bowshots far,
Paused the deep front of England's war,
And rested on their arms awhile,
To close and rank their warlike file,
And hold high council, if that night
Should view the strife, or dawning light.

XIV.

O gay, yet fearful to behold,
Flashing with steel and rough with gold,
And bristled o'er with bills and spears,
With plumes and pennons waving fair,
Was that bright battle-front! for there
Rode England's king and peers;
And who, that saw the monarch ride,
His kingdom battled by his side,
Could then his direful doom foretell!—
Fair was his seat in knightly selle,
And in his sprightly eye was set
Some spark of the Plantagenet.
Though light and wandering was his glance,
It flashed at sight of shield and lance.
"Know'st thou," he said, "De Argentine,
Yon knight who marshals thus their line?"—
"The tokens on his helmet tell
The Bruce, my liege: I know him well."—
"And shall the audacious traitor brave
The presence where our banners wave?"—
"So please my liege," said Argentine,
"Were he but horsed on steed like mine,
To give him fair and knightly chance,
I would adventure forth my lance."—
"In battle-day," the king replied,
"Nice tourney rules are set aside.
—Still must the rebel dare our wrath?
Set on him—sweep him from our path!"—
And, at king Edward's signal, soon
Dashed from the ranks sir Henry Boune.

XV.

Of Hereford's high blood he came,
A race renowned for knightly fame.
He burned before his monarch's eye—
To do some deed of chivalry.
He spurred his steed, he couched his lance,
And darted on the Bruce at once.
As motionless as rocks, that bide
The wrath of the advancing tide,
The Bruce stood fast.—Each breast beat high,
And dazzled was each gazing eye—
The heart had hardly time to think,
The eyelid scarce had time to wink,
While on the king, like flash of flame,
Spurred to full speed the war-horse came!
The partridge may the falcon mock,
If that slight palfrey stand the shock—
But, swerving from the knight's career,
Just as they met, Bruce shunned the spear.
Onward the baffled warrior bore
His course—but soon his course was o'er!
High in his stirrups stood the king,
And gave his battle-axe the swing.
Right on De Boune, the whiles he passed,
Fell that stern dint—the first—the last!
Such strength upon the blow was put,
The helmet crashed like hazel-nut;
The axe-shaft, with its brazen clasp,
Was shivered to the gauntlet grasp.
Springs from the blow the startled horse,
Drops to the plain the lifeless corse;
First of that fatal field, how soon,
How sudden, fell the fierce De Boune!

XVI.

One pitying glance the monarch sped,
Where on the field his foe lay dead;
Then gently turned his palfrey's head,
And, pacing back his sober way,
Slowly he gained his own array.
There round their king the leaders crowd,
And blame his recklessness aloud,
That risked 'gainst each adventurous spear
A life so valued and so dear.
His broken weapon's shaft surveyed
The king, and careless answer made,—
"My loss may pay my folly's tax;
I've broke my trusty battle-axe."
'Twas then Fitz-Louis, bending low,
Did Isabel's commission show;
Edith, disguised, at distance stands,
And hides her blushes with her hands.
The monarch's brow has changed its hue,
Away the gory axe he threw,
While to the seeming page he drew,
Clearing war's terrors from his eye.
Her hand with gentle ease he took,
With such a kind protecting look,
As to a weak and timid boy
Might speak, that elder brother's care
And elder brother's love were there.

XVII.

"Fear not," he said, "young Amadine!"
Then whispered, "Still that name be thine.

Fate plays her wonted fantasy,
Kind Amadine, with thee and me,
And sends thee here in doubtful hour.
But soon we are beyond her power;
For on this chosen battle-plain,
Victor or vanquished, I remain.
Do thou to yonder hill repair;
The followers of our host are there,
And all who may not weapons bear.
Fitz-Louis have him in thy care.
Joyful we meet, if all go well:
If not, in Arran's holy cell
Thou must take part with Isabel;
For brave lord Ronald, too, hath sworn,
Not to regain the maid of Lorn,
(The bliss on earth he covets most,)
Would he forsake his battle-post,
Or shun the fortune that may fall
To Bruce, to Scotland, and to all.
But, hark! some news these trumpets tell;
Forgive my haste—farewell—farewell."
And in a lower voice he said,
"Be of good cheer—farewell, sweet maid!"

XVIII.

"What train of dust, with trumpet-sound
And glimmering spears, is wheeling round
Our left-ward flank?"[14]—the monarch cried
To Moray's earl, who rode beside.
"Lo! round thy station pass the foes!
Randolph, thy wreath has lost a rose."—
The earl his visor closed, and said,
"My wreath shall bloom, or life shall fade.—
Follow, my household!"—And they go
Like lightning on the advancing foe.
"My liege," said noble Douglas then,
"Earl Randolph has but one to ten:
Let me go forth his band to aid!"—
—"Stir not. The error he hath made,
Let him amend it as he may;
I will not weaken mine array."
Then loudly rose the conflict-cry,
And Douglas's brave heart swelled high,—
"My liege," he said, "with patient ear
I must not Moray's death-knell hear!"—
"Then go—but speed thee back again."—
Forth sprung the Douglas with his train;
But, when they won a rising hill,
He bade his followers hold them still.—
"See, see! the routed southern fly!
The earl hath won the victory.
Lo! where yon steeds run masterless,
His banner towers above the press.
Rein up; our presence would impair
The fame we come too late to share."
Back to the host the Douglas rode,
And soon glad tidings are abroad,
That, Dayncourt by stout Randolph slain,
His followers fled with loosened rein.
That skirmish closed the busy day,
And, couched in battle's prompt array,
Each army on their weapons lay.

XIX.

It was a night of lovely June,
High rode in cloudless blue the moon,
Demayet smiled beneath her ray;
Old Stirling's towers arose in light,
And, twined in links of silver bright,
Her winding river lay.
Ah, gentle planet! other sight
Shall greet thee next returning night,
Of broken arms and banners tore,
And marshes dark with human gore,
And piles of slaughtered men and horse,
And Forth that floats the frequent corse,
And many a wounded wretch to plain
Beneath thy silver light in vain!
But now, from England's host, the cry
Thou hear'st of wassail revelry,
While from the Scottish legions pass
The murmured prayer, the early mass!
Here, numbers had presumption given;
There, bands o'ermatch'd sought aid from heaven.

XX.

On Gillie's hill, whose height commands
The battle-field, fair Edith stands,
With serf and page unfit for war,
To eye the conflict from afar.
O! with what doubtful agony
She sees the dawning tint the sky!
Now on the Ochils gleams the sun,
And glistens now Demayet dun;
Is it the lark that carols shrill,
Is it the bittern's early hum?
No!—distant, but increasing still,
The trumpet's sound swells up the hill,
With the deep murmur of the drum.
Responsive from the Scottish host,
Pipe clang and bugle-sound were tossed,[15]
His breast and brow each soldier crossed,
And started from the ground;
Armed and arrayed for instant fight,
Rose archer, spearman, squire, and knight,
And in the pomp of battle bright
The dread battalia frowned.

XXI.

Now onward, and in open view,
The countless ranks of England drew,[16]
Dark rolling like the ocean-tide,
When the rough west hath chafed his pride,
And his deep roar sends challenge wide
To all that bars his way!
In front the gallant archers trode,
The men-at-arms behind them rode,
And midmost of the phalanx broad
The monarch held his sway.
Beside him many a war-horse fumes,
Around him waves a sea of plumes,
Where many a knight in battle known,
And some who spurs had first braced on,
And deemed that fight should see them won,
King Edward's hests obey.
De Argentine attends his side,
With stout De Valance, Pembroke's pride,
Selected champions from the train,
To wait upon his bridle-rein.
Upon the Scottish foe he gazed—
—At once before his sight amazed,
Sunk banner, spear, and shield;
Each weapon-point is downward sent,
Each warrior to the ground is bent.
"The rebels, Argentine, repent!
For pardon they have kneeled."—
"Ay!—but they bend to other powers,
And other pardon sue than ours!
See where you barefoot abbot stands,
And blesses them with lifted hands![17]
Upon the spot where they have kneeled,
These men will die, or win the field."—
—"Then prove we if they die or win!
Bid Gloster's earl the fight begin."—

XXII.

Earl Gilbert waved his truncheon high,
Just as the northern ranks arose,

Signal for England's archery
To halt and bend their bows.
Then stepped each yeoman forth a pace,
Glanced at the intervening space,
And raised his left hand high;
To the right ear the cords they bring—
—At once ten thousand bow-strings ring,
Ten thousand arrows fly!
Nor paused on the devoted Scot
The ceaseless fury of their shot;
As fiercely and as fast,
Forth whistling came the gray-goose wing,
As the wild hail stones pelt and ring
Adown December's blast.
Nor mountain targe of tough bull-hide,
Nor lowland mail, that storm may bide;
Wo, wo to Scotland's bannered pride,
If the fell shower may last!
Upon the right, behind the wood,
Each by his steed dismounted, stood
The Scottish chivalry;—
—With foot in stirrup, hand on mane,
Fierce Edward Bruce can scarce restrain
His own keen heart, his eager train,
Until the archers gained the plain;
Then, "mount, ye gallants free!"
He cried; and, vaulting from the ground,
His saddle every horseman found,
On high their glittering crests they toss,
As springs the wild-fire from the moss;
The shield hangs down on every breast,
Each ready lance is in the rest,
And loud shouts Edward Bruce,—
"Forth, marshal, on the peasant foe!
We'll tame the terrors of their bow,
And cut the bow-string loose!"—[13]

XXIII.

Then spurs were dashed in chargers' flanks,
They rushed among the archer ranks.
No spears were there the shock to let,
No stakes to turn the charge were set,
And how shall yeoman's armour slight
Stand the long lance and mace of might?
Or what may their short swords avail,
'Gainst barbed horse and shirt of mail?
Amid their ranks the chargers sprung,
High o'er their heads the weapons swung,
And shriek and groan and vengeful shout
Give note of triumph and of rout!
Awhile, with stubborn hardihood,
Their English hearts the strife made good;
Borne down at length on every side,
Compelled to flight, they scatter wide.—
Let stags of Sherwood leap for glee,
And bound the deer of Dallom-Lee!
The broken bows of Bannock's shore
Shall in the green-wood ring no more!
Round Wakefield's merry may-pole now,
The maids may twine the summer bough,
May northward look with longing glance,
For those that wont to lead the dance,
For the blith archers look in vain!
Broken, dispersed, in flight o'erta'en,
Pierced through, trod down, by thousands slain,
They cumber Bannock's bloody plain.

XXIV.

The king with scorn beheld their flight.
"Are these," he said, "our yeomen wight?
Each braggart churl could boast before,
Twelve Scottish lives his baldric bore![19]
Fitter to plunder chase or park,
Than make a manly foe their mark.—
Forward, each gentleman and knight!
Let gentle blood show generous might,
And chivalry redeem the fight!"—
To right-ward of the wild affray,
The field showed fair and level way;
But, in mid space, the Bruce's care
Had bored the ground with many a pit,
With turf and brushwood hidden yet,
That formed a ghastly snare.
Rushing, ten thousand horsemen came,
With spears in rest, and hearts on flame,
That panted for the shock!
With blazing crests and banners spread,
And trumpet-clang and clamour dread,
The wide plain thundered on their tread,
As far as Stirling rock.
Down! down! in headlong overthrow,
Horseman and horse, the foremost go,[20]
Wild floundering on the field!
The first are in destruction's gorge,
Their followers wildly o'er them urge;—
The knightly helm and shield,
The mail, the acton, and the spear,
Strong hand, high heart, are useless here!
Loud from the mass confused the cry
Of dying warriors swells on high,
And steeds that shriek in agony![21]
They came like mountain-torrent red,
That thunders o'er its rocky bed;
They broke like that same torrent's wave,
When swallowed by a darksome cave.
Billows on billows burst and boil,
Maintaining still the stern turmoil,
And to their wild and tortured groan
Each adds new terrors of his own!

XXV.

Too strong in courage and in might
Was England yet, to yield the fight.
Her noblest all are here;
Names that to fear were never known,
Bold Norfolk's earl De Brotherton,
And Oxford's famed De Vere.
There Gloster plied the bloody sword,
And Berkley, Grey, and Hereford,
Bottetourt and Sanzavere,
Ross, Montague, and Mauley, came,
And Courtenay's pride, and Percy's fame—
Names known too well in Scotland's war,
At Falkirk, Methven, and Dunbar,
Blazed broader yet in after years,
At Cressy red and fell Poitiers.
Pembroke with these, and Argentine,
Brought up the rearward battle-line.
With caution o'er the ground they tread,
Slippery with blood and piled with dead,
Till hand to hand in battle set,
The bills with spears and axes met,
And, closing dark on every side,
Raged the full contest far and wide.
Then was the strength of Douglas tried,
Then proved was Randolph's generous pride,
And well did Stewart's actions grace
The sire of Scotland's royal race!
Firmly they kept their ground;
As firmly England onward pressed,
And down went many a noble crest,
And rent was many a valiant breast,
And slaughter revelled round.

XXVI.

Unflinching foot 'gainst foot was set,
Unceasing blow by blow was met;

The groans of those who fell
Were drowned amid the shriller clang,
That from the blades and harness rang,
And in the battle-yell.
Yet fast they fell, unheard, forgot,
Both southern fierce and hardy Scot;—
And O! amid that waste of life,
What various motives fired the strife!
The aspiring noble bled for fame,
The patriot for his country's claim;
This knight his youthful strength to prove,
And that to win his lady's love;
Some fought from ruffian thirst of blood,
From habit some, or hardihood.
But ruffian stern, and soldier good,
The noble and the slave,
From various cause the same wild road,
On the same bloody morning, trode,
To that dark inn, the grave!

XXVII.

The tug of strife to flag begins,
Though neither loses yet nor wins.
High rides the sun, thick rolls the dust,
And feebler speeds the blow and thrust.
Douglas leans on his war-sword now,
And Randolph ipes his bloody brow,
Nor less had toiled each southern knight,
From morn till mid-day in the fight.
Strong Egremont for air must gasp,
Beauchamp undoes his visor-clasp,
And Montague must quit his spear,
And sinks thy falchion, bold De Vere!
The blows of Berkley fall less fast,
And gallant Pembroke's bugle-blast
Hath lost its lively tone;
Sinks, Argentine, thy battle-word,
And Percy's shout was fainter heard,
"My merry-men, fight on!"—

XXVIII.

Bruce, with the pilot's wary eye,
The slackening of the storm could spy.
"One effort more, and Scotland's free!
Lord of the Isles, my trust in thee
Is firm as Ailsa rock.
Rush on with highland sword and targe,
I, with my Carrick spearmen, charge;[22]
Now, forward to the shock!"—
At once the spears were forward thrown,
Against the sun the broadswords shone;
The pibroch lent its maddening tone,
And loud king Robert's voice was known—
"Carrick, press on—they fail, they fail!
Press on, brave sons of Innisgail,
The foe is fainting fast!
Each strike for parent, child, and wife,
For Scotland, liberty, and life,—
The battle cannot last!"—

XXIX.

The fresh and desperate onset bore
The foes three furlongs back and more,
Leaving their noblest in their gore.
Alone, De Argentine
Yet bears on high his red cross shield,
Gathers the relics of the field,
Renews the ranks where they have reeled,
And still makes good the line.
Brief strife, but fierce, his efforts raise
A bright but momentary blaze.
Fair Edith heard the southern shout,
Beheld them turning from the rout,
Heard the wild call their trumpets sent,
In notes 'twixt triumph and lament.
That rallying force, combined anew,
Appeared, in her distracted view,
To hem the isles-men round;
"O God! the combat they renew,
And is no rescue found!
And ye that look thus tamely on,
And see your native land o'erthrown,
O! are your hearts of flesh or stone?"—

XXX.

The multitude that watched afar,
Rejected from the ranks of war,
Had not unmoved beheld the fight,
When strove the Bruce for Scotland's right;
Each heart had caught the patriot's spark,
Old man and stripling, priest and clerk,
Bondsman and serf; e'en female hand
Stretched to the hatchet or the brand;
But, when mute Amadine they heard
Give to their zeal his signal-word,
A frenzy fired the throng:—
"Portents and miracles impeach
Our sloth—the dumb our duties teach
And he that gives the mute his speech,
Can bid the weak be strong.
To us, as to our lords, are given
A native earth, a promised heaven;
To us, as to our lords, belongs
The vengeance for our nation's wrongs,
The choice, 'twixt death or freedom, warms
Our breasts as theirs—To arms, to arms!"
To arms they flew,—axe, club, or spear,—
And mimic ensigns high they rear,[23]
And, like a bannered host afar,
Bear down on England's wearied war.

XXXI.

Already scattered o'er the plain,
Reproof, command, and counsel vain,
The rearward squadrons fled amain,
Or made but doubtful stay;—
But when they marked the seeming show
Of fresh and fierce and marshalled foe,
The boldest broke array.
O! give their hapless prince his due![24]
In vain the royal Edward threw
His person 'mid the spears,
Cried "Fight!" to terror and despair,
Menaced, and wept, and tore his hair,
And cursed their caitiff fears;
Till Pembroke turned his bridle rein,
And forced him from the fatal plain.
With them rode Argentine, until
They gained the summit of the hill,
But quitted there the train:
"In yonder field a gage I left,—
I must not live of fame bereft;
I needs must turn again.
Speed hence, my liege, for on your trace
The fiery Douglas takes the chase,
I know his banner well.
God send my sovereign joy and bliss,
And many a happier field than this!—
Once more, my liege, farewell."—

XXXII.

Again he faced the battle-field,—
Wildly they fly, are slain, or yield.
"Now then," he said, and couched his spear,
"My course is run, the goal is near;
One effort more, one brave career,
Must close this race of mine."

Then, in his stirrups rising high,
He shouted loud his battle-cry,
"Saint James for Argentine!"
And, of the bold pursuers, four
The gallant knight from saddle bore;
But not unharmed—a lance's point
Has found his breast-plate's loosened joint,
An axe has razed his crest;
Yet still on Colonsay's fierce lord,
Who pressed the chase with gory sword,
He rode with spear in rest,
And through his bloody tartans bored,
And through his gallant breast.
Nailed to the earth, the mountaineer
Yet writhed him up against the spear,
And swung his broadsword round!
—Stirrup, steel-boot, and cuish gave way,
Beneath that blow's tremendous sway,
The blood gushed from the wound;
And the grim lord of Colonsay
Hath turned him on the ground,
And laughed in death-pang, that his blade
The mortal thrust so well repaid.

XXXIII.

Now toiled the Bruce, the battle done,
To use his conquest boldly won;
And gave command for horse and spear
To press the southern's scattered rear,
Nor let his broken force combine,
—When the war-cry of Argentine
Fell faintly on his ear!
"Save, save his life," he cried, "O save
The kind, the noble, and the brave!"—
The squadrons round free passage gave,
The wounded knight drew near.
He raised his red-cross shield no more,
Helm, cuish, and breast-plate streamed with gore;
Yet, as he saw the king advance,
He strove e'en then to couch his lance—
The effort was in vain!
The spur-stroke failed to rouse the horse;
Wounded and weary, in mid course,
He stumbled on the plain.
Then foremost was the generous Bruce
To raise his head, his helm to loose;—
"Lord earl, the day is thine!
My sovereign's charge, and adverse fate,
Have made our meeting all too late;
Yet this may Argentine,
As boon from ancient comrade, crave—
A christian's mass, a soldier's grave."-

XXXIV.

Bruce pressed his dying hand—its grasp
Kindly replied; but, in his clasp,
It stiffened and grew cold—
And, "O farewell!" the victor cried,
"Of chivalry the flower and pride,
The arm in battle bold,
The courteous mien, the noble race,
The stainless faith, the manly face!-
Bid Ninian's convent light their shrine,
For late wake of De Argentine.
O'er better knight on death bier laid,
Torch never gleamed nor mass was said!"—

XXXV.

Nor for De Argentine alone,
Through Ninian's church these torches shone,
And rose the death-prayer's awful tone.[25]
That yellow lustre glimmered pale,
On broken plate and bloodied mail,
Rent crest and shattered coronet,
Of baron, earl, and banneret;
And the best names that England knew,
Claimed in the death-prayer dismal due.
Yet mourn not, land of fame!
Though ne'er the leopards on thy shield
Retreated from so sad a field,
Since Norman William came,
Oft may thine annals justly boast
Of battles stern by Scotland lost;
Grudge not her victory,
When for her freeborn rights she strove;
Rights dear to all who freedom love,
To none so dear as thee!

XXXVI.

Turn we to Bruce, whose curious ear
Must from Fitz-Louis tidings hear;
With him an hundred voices tell
Of prodigy and miracle,
"For the mute page had spoke."—
"Page!" said Fitz-Louis, "rather say,
An angel sent from realms of day,
To burst the English yoke.
I saw his plume and bonnet drop,
When hurrying from the mountain top;
A lovely brow, dark locks that wave,
To his bright eyes new lustre gave,
A step as light upon the green,
As if his pinions waved unseen."—
"Spoke he with none?"—"With none—one word
Burst when he saw the Island lord,
Returning from the battle-field."—
"What answer made the chief?"—"He kneeled,
Durst not look up, but muttered low,
Some mingled sounds that none might know,
And greeted him 'twixt joy and fear,
As being of superior sphere."—

XXXVII.

E'en upon Bannock's bloody plain,
Heaped then with thousands of the slain,
'Mid victor monarch's musings high,
Mirth laughed in good king Robert's eye.
"And bore he such angelic air,
Such noble front, such waving hair?
Hath Ronald kneeled to him?" he said,
"Then must we call the church to aid—
Our will be to the abbot known,
Ere these strange news are wider blown,
To Cambus-Kenneth straight he pass,
And deck the church for solemn mass,
To pay, for high deliverance given,
A nation's thanks to gracious heaven.
Let him array, besides, such state,
As should on princes' nuptials wait.
Ourself the cause, through fortune's spite,
That once broke short that spousal rite,
Ourself will grace, with early morn,
The bridal of the maid of Lorn."

CONCLUSION.

Go forth, my song, upon thy venturous way;
Go boldly forth; nor yet thy master blame,
Who chose no patron for his humble lay,
And graced thy numbers with no friendly name,
Whose partial zeal might smooth thy path to fame.
There was—and O! how many sorrows crowd
Into these two brief words! *there was* a claim
By generous friendship given—had fate allowed,
It well had bid thee rank the proudest of the proud!

All angel now—yet little less than all,
While still a pilgrim in our world below!
What 'vails it us that patience to recal,
Which hid its own, to sooth all other wo;
What 'vails to tell, how virtue's purest glow
Shone yet more lovely in a form so fair;—
And, least of all, what 'vails the world should know,
That one poor garland, twined to deck thy hair,
Is hung upon thy hearse, to droop and wither there!

NOTES TO CANTO I.

1. Thy rugged halls, Artornish! rung.—P. 251.

THE ruins of the castle of Artornish are situated upon a promontory, on the Morven, or mainland side of the sound of Mull, a name given to the deep arm of the sea which divides that island from the continent. The situation is wild and romantic in the highest degree, having on the one hand a high and precipitous chain of rocks overhanging the sea, and on the other the narrow entrance to the beautiful salt-water lake, called Loch-Alline, which is in many places finely fringed with copsewood. The ruins of Artornish are not now very considerable, and consist chiefly of the remains of an old keep, or tower, with fragments of outward defences. But, in former days, it was a place of great consequence, being one of the principal strong-holds which the lords of the Isles, during the period of their stormy independence, possessed upon the mainland of Argyleshire. Here they assembled what popular tradition calls their parliaments, meaning, I suppose, their *cour plenière*, or assembly of feudal and patriarchal vassals and dependents. From this castle of Artornish, upon the 19th day of October, 1461, John de Yle, designing himself earl of Ross and lord of the Isles, granted, in the style of an independent sovereign, a commission to his trusty and well beloved cousins, Ronald of the Isles, and Duncan, archdean of the Isles, for empowering them to enter into a treaty with the most excellent prince Edward, by the grace of God, king of France and England, and lord of Ireland. Edward IV, on his part, named Laurence bishop of Durham, the earl of Worcester, the prior of St. John's, lord Wenlock, and Mr. Robert Stillington, keeper of the privy seal, his deputies and commissioners, to confer with those named by the lord of the Isles. The conference terminated in a treaty, by which the lord of the Isles agreed to become a vassal to the crown of England, and to assist Edward IV and James earl of Douglas, then in banishment, in subduing the realm of Scotland.

The first article provides, that John de Isle, earl of Ross, with his son Donald Balloch, and his grandson John de Isle, with all their subjects, men, people, and inhabitants, become vassals and liegemen to Edward IV of England, and assist him in his wars in Scotland or Ireland; and then follow the allowances to be made to the lord of the Isles, in recompense of his military service, and the provisions for dividing such conquests as their united arms should make upon the mainland of Scotland among the confederates. These appear such curious illustrations of the period, that they are here subjoined:

"*Item*, The seid John erle of Rosse, shall, from the seid fest of Whittesontyde next comyng, yerely, durying his lyf, have and take, for fees and wages in tym of peas, of the seid most high and christien prince c. marc sterlyng of Englysh money; and in time of werre, as long as he shall entende with his myght and power in the seid werres, in maner and fourme aboveseid, he shall have wages of cc. lib. sterlyng of English money yearly; and after the rate of the tyme that he shall be occupyed in the seid werres.

"*Item*, The seid Donald shall, from the seid feste of Whittesontide, have and take, during his lyf, yerly, in tyme of peas, for his fees and wages, xx l. sterlyng of English money; and, when he shall be occupied and intend to the werre, with his myght and power, and in manner and fourme aboveseid, he shall have and take, for his wages yearly, xl l. sterlynge of Englysh money; or for the rate of the tyme of werre ——

"*Item*, The seid John, sonn and heire apparent of the said Donald, shall have and take, yerely, from the seid fest, for his fees and wages, in the tyme of peas, x l. sterlynges of Englysh money; and for tyme of werre, and his intendyng thereto, in maner and fourme aboveseid, he shall have, for his fees and wages, yerely xx l. sterlynges of Englysh money; or after the rate of the tyme that he shall be occupied in the werre: And the seid John, th'erle Donald and John, and eche of them, shall have good and sufficiaunt paiment of the seid fees and wages, as wel for tyme of pees as of werre, according to these articules and appoyntements. *Item*, It is appointed, accorded, concluded, and finally determined, that, if it so be that hereafter the seid reaume of Scotlande, or the more part therof, be conquered, subdued, and brought to the obeisance of the seid most high and christien prince, and his heires, or successoures, of the seid Lionell, in fourme aboveseid descendyng, be the assistance, helpe, and aide of the seid John erle of Rosse, and Donald, and of James erle of Douglas, then, the seid fees and wages for the tyme of peas eessyng, the same erles and Donald shall have, by the graunte of the same most christien prince, all the possessions of the seid reaume beyond Scottishe see, they to be departed equally betwix them; eche of them, his heires and successours, to holde his parte of the seid most christien prince, his heires, and successours, for evermore, in right of his croune of England, by homage and feaute to be done therefore.

"*Item*, If so be that, by the aide and assistance of the seid James erle of Douglas, the said reaume of Scotlande be conquered and subdued as above, then he shall have, enjoie, and inherite all his own possessions, landes, and inheritance, on this syde the seid Scottishe see; that is to saye, betwixt the seid Scottishe see and England, such he hath enjoied and be possessed of before this; there to holde them of the seid most high and christien prince, his heires, and successours, as is aboveseid, for evermore in right of the croune of Englande, as weel the seid erle of Douglas, as his heires and successours, by homage and feaute to be done therefore."—*Rymer's Fœdera, Conventiones, Literæ et cujuscunque generis Acta Publica*, ful. vol. v, 1741.

Such was the treaty of Artornish; but it does not appear that the allies ever made any very active effort to realize their ambitious designs. It will serve to show both the power of these reguli, and their independence of the crown of Scotland.

It is only farther necessary to say of the castle of Artornish, that it is almost opposite to the bay of Aros, in the island of Mull, where there was another castle, the occasional residence of the lord of the Isles.

2. Rude Heiskar's seal through surges dark
Will long pursue the minstrel's bark.—P. 251.

The seal displays a taste for music, which could scarcely be expected from his habits and local predilections. They will long follow a boat in which any musical instrument is played, and even a tune simply whistled has attractions for them. The dean of the Isles says of Heiskar, a small uninhabited rock, about twelve (Scottish) miles from the isle of Uist, that an infinite slaughter of seals takes place there

3. ——dark Mull! thy mighty sound.—P. 252.

The sound of Mull, which divides that island from the continent of Scotland, is one of the most striking scenes which the Hebrides afford to the traveller. Sailing from Oban to Aros, or Tobermory, through a narrow channel, yet deep enough to bear vessels of the largest burthen, he has on his left the bold and mountainous shores of Mull; on the right those of that district of Argyleshire, called Morven, or Morvern, successively indented by deep salt-water lochs, running up many miles inland. To the south-eastward arises a prodigious range of mountains, among which Cruachan-Ben is pre-eminent. And to the north-east is the no less huge and picturesque range of the Ardnamurchan hills. Many ruinous castles, situated generally upon cliffs overhanging the ocean, add interest to the scene. Those of Dunolly and Dunstaffnage are first passed, then that of Duart, formerly belonging to the chief of the warlike and powerful sept of Macleans, and the scene of Miss Baillie's beautiful tragedy, entitled the Family Legend. Still passing on to the northward, Artornish and Aros become visible upon the opposite shores, and, lastly, Mingarry, and other ruins of less distinguished note. In fine weather, a grander and more impressive scene, both from its natural beauties, and associations with ancient history and tradition, can hardly be imagined. When the weather is rough, the passage is both difficult and dangerous, from the narrowness of the channel, and in part from the number of inland lakes, out of which sally forth a number of conflicting and thwarting tides, making the navigation perilous to open boats. The sudden flaws and gusts of wind which issue without a moment's warning from the mountain glens are equally formidable. So that in unsettled weather, a stranger, if not much accustomed to the sea, may sometimes add to the other sublime sensations excited by the scene, that feeling of dignity which arises from a sense of danger.

4. From Hirt——
To the green Ilay's fertile shore.—P. 252.

The number of the western isles of Scotland exceeds two hundred, of which St. Kilda is the most northerly, anciently called Hirth, or Hirt, probably from "earth," being in fact the whole globe to its inhabitants. Ilay, which now belongs almost entirely to Walter Campbell, esq. of Shawfield, is by far the most fertile of the Hebrides, and has been greatly improved under the spirited and sagacious management of the present proprietor. This was in ancient times the principal abode of the lords of the Isles, being, if not the largest, the most important island of their archipelago. In Martin's time, some relics of their grandeur were yet extant. "Loch-Finlagan, about three miles in circumference, affords salmon, trouts, and eels: this lake lies in the centre of the isle. The isle Finlagan, from which this lake hath its name, is in it. It is famous for being once the court in which the great Mack-Donald, king of the Isles, had his residence; his houses, chapel, &c. are now ruinous. His guards de corps, called Luch-tach, kept guard on the lakeside nearest to the isle: the walls of their houses are still to be seen there. The high court of judicature, consisting of fourteen, sat always here; and there was an appeal to them from all the courts in the Isles: the eleventh share of the sum in debate was due to the principal judge. There was a big stone of seven foot square in which there was a deep impression made to receive the feet of Mack-Donald; for he was crowned king of the Isles standing in this stone, and swore that he would continue his vassals in the possession of their lands, and do exact justice to all his subjects: and then his father's sword was put into his hands. The bishop of Argyle and seven priests anointed him king, in presence of all the heads of the tribes in the Isles and continent, and were his vassals: at which time the orator rehearsed a catalogue of his ancestors, &c."—*Martin's Account of the Western Isles, octavo, London*, 1716, p. 240, 1.

5. ——Mingarry, sternly placed,
O'erawes the woodland and the waste.—P. 252.

The castle of Mingarry is situated on the seacoast of the district of Ardnamurchan. The ruins, which are tolerably entire, are surrounded by a very high wall, forming a kind of polygon, for the purpose of adapting itself to the projecting angles of a precipice overhanging the sea, on which the castle stands. It was anciently the residence of the Mac-Ians, a clan of Mack-Donalds descended from Ian, or John, a grandson of Angus Og, lord of the Isles. The last time that Mingarry was of military importance, occurs in the celebrated Leabhar dearg, or Red-book of Clanronald, a MS. renowned in the Ossianic controversy. Allaster Mac-Donald, commonly called Colquitto, who commanded the Irish auxiliaries, sent over by the earl of Antrim during the great civil war to the assistance of Montrose, began his enterprize in 1644, by taking the castles of Kinloch-Alline and Mingarry, the last of which made considerable resistance, as might, from the strength of the situation, be expected. In the meanwhile, Allaster Mac-Donald's ships, which had brought him over, were attacked in Loch Eisord, in Skye, by an armament sent round by the covenanting parliament, and his own vessel was taken. This circumstance is said chiefly to have induced him to continue in Scotland, where there seemed little prospect of raising an army in behalf of the king. He had no sooner moved eastward to join Montrose, a junction which he effected in the braes of Athole, than the marquis of Argyle besieged the castle of Mingarry, but without success. Among other warriors and chiefs whom Argyle summoned to his camp to assist upon this occasion, was John of Moidart, the captain of Clanronald. Clanronald appeared; but, far from yielding effectual assistance to Argyle, he took the opportunity of being in arms to lay waste the district of Sunart, then belonging to the adherents of Argyle, and sent part of the spoil to relieve the castle of Mingarry. Thus the castle was maintained until relieved by Allaster Mac-Donald (Colquitto,) who had been detached for the purpose by Montrose. These particulars are hardly worth mentioning, were they

not connected with the memorable successes of Montrose, related by an eye-witness, and hitherto unknown to Scottish historians.

6. The heir of mighty Somerled.—P. 252.

Somerled was thane of Argyle and lord of the Isles, about the middle of the twelfth century. He seems to have exercised his authority in both capacities, independent of the crown of Scotland, against which he often stood in hostility. He made various incursions upon the western lowlands during the reign of Malcolm IV, and seems to have made peace with him upon the terms of an independent prince, about the year 1157. In 1164, he resumed the war against Malcolm, and invaded Scotland with a large, but probably a tumultuary army, collected in the Isles, in the mainland of Argyleshire, and in the neighbouring provinces of Ireland. He was defeated and slain in an engagement with a very inferior force, near Renfrew. His son Gillicolane fell in the same battle. This mighty chieftain married a daughter of Olaus, king of Man. From him our genealogists deduce two dynasties, distinguished in the stormy history of the middle ages; the lords of the Isles descended from his elder son Ronald, and the lords of Lorn, who took their surname of M'Dougal, as descended of his second son Dougal. That Somerled's territories upon the mainland, and upon the islands, should have been thus divided between his two sons, instead of passing to the elder exclusively, may illustrate the uncertainty of descent among the great highland families, which we shall presently notice.

7. Lord of the Isles.—P. 252.

The representative of this independent principality, for such it seems to have been, though acknowleding occasionally the pre-eminence of the Scottish crown, was, at the period of the poem, Angus, called Angus Og; but the name has been, *euphoniæ gratia*, exchanged for that of Ronald, which frequently occurs in the genealogy. Angus was a protector of Robert Bruce, whom he received in his castle of Dunnaverty, during the time of his greatest distress. As I shall be equally liable to censure for attempting to decide a controversy which has long existed between three distinguished chieftains of this family, who have long disputed the representation of the lord of the Isles, or for leaving a question of such importance altogether untouched, I choose, in the first place, to give such information as I have been able to derive from highland genealogists, and which, for those who have patience to investigate such subjects, really contains some curious information concerning the history of the Isles. In the second place, I shall offer a few remarks upon the rules of succession at that period, without pretending to decide their bearing upon the question at issue, which must depend upon evidence which I have had no opportunity to examine.

"Angus Og," says an ancient manuscript translated from the Gaelic, "son of Angus Mor, son of Donald, son of Ronald, son of Somerled, high chief and superior lord of Innisgall, (or the Isles of the Gael, the general name given to the Hebrides,) he married a daughter of Cunbui, namely, Cathan; she was mother to John, son of Angus, and with her came an unusual portion from Ireland, viz. twenty-four clans, of whom twenty-four families in Scotland are descended. Angus had another son, namely, young John Fraoch, whose descendants are called Clan-Ean of Glencoe, and the M Donalds of Fraoch. This Angus Og died in Isla, where his body was interred; his son John succeeded to the inheritance of Innisgall. He had good descendants, namely, three sons procreate of Ann, daughter of Rodric, high chief of Lorn, and one daughter, Mary, married to John Maclean, laird of Duart, and Lauchlan, his brother, laird of Coll; she was interred in the church of the Black Nuns. The eldest sons of John were Ronald, Godfrey, and Angus.——He gave Ronald a great inheritance. These were the lands which he gave him, viz. from Kileumin in Abertarf to the river Seil, and from thence to Beilli, north of Eig and Rum, and the two Uists, and from thence to the foot of the river Glaichan, and threescore long ships. John married afterwards Margaret Stewart, daughter to Robert Stewart, king of Scotland, called John Fernyear; she bore him three good sons, Donald of the Isles, the heir, John the Tainister (*i. e.* Thane,) the second son, and Alexander Carrach. John had another son called Marcos, of whom the clan Macdonald of Cnoc, in Tirowen, are descended. This John lived long, and made donations to Icolumkill; he covered the chapel of Eorsay-Elan, the chapel of Finlagan, and the chapel of the Isle of Tsuibhne, and gave the proper furniture for the service of God, upholding the clergy and monks; he built or repaired the church of the Holy Cross immediately before his death. He died at his own castle of Ardtorinish; many priests and monks took the sacrament at his funeral, and they embalmed the body of this dear man, and brought it to Icolumkill; the abbot, monks, and vicar, came as they ought to meet the king of Fiongal,* and out of great respect to his memory mourned eight days and nights over it, and laid it in the same grave with his father, in the church of Oran, 1380.

"Ronald, son of John, was chief ruler of the Isles in his father's life-time, and was old in the government at his father's death.

"He assembled the gentry of the Isles, brought the sceptre from Kildonan in Eig, and delivered it to his brother Donald, who was thereupon called M'Donald, and Donald lord of the Isles,† contrary to the opinion of the men of the Isles.

"Ronald, son of John, son of Angus Og, was a great supporter of the church and clergy; his descendants are called Clanronald. He gave the lands of Tiruma, in Uist, to the minister of it for ever, for the honour of God and Columkill; he was proprietor of all the lands of the north along the coast and the Isles; he died in the year of Christ, 1386, in his own mansion of Castle Tirim, leaving five children. Donald of the Isles, son of John, son of Angus Og, the brother of Ronald, took possession of Innisgall by the consent of his brother and the gentry thereof: they were all obedient to him; he married Mary Lesly, daughter to the earl of Ross, and by her came the earldom of Ross to the M' Donalds. After his succession to that earldom, he was called M'Donald, lord of the Isles, and earl of Ross. There are many things written of him in other places.

"He fought the battle of Garioch, (*i. e.* Harlaw,) against duke Murdock, the governor: the earl of Mar commanded the army, in support of his claim to the earldom of Ross; which was ceded to him by king James the First, after his release from the

* Western isles and adjacent coast. † Innisgall.

king of England, and duke Murdoch, his two sons and retainers, were beheaded: he gave lands in Mull and Isla to the minister of Ili, and every privilege which the minister of Iona had formerly, besides vessels of gold and silver to Columkill, for the monastery, and became himself one of the fraternity. He left issue, a lawful heir, to Innisgall and Ross, namely, Alexander, the son of Donald: he died in Isla, and his body was interred in the south side of the temple of Oran. Alexander, called John of the Isles, son of Alexander of the Isles, son of Donald of the Isles. Angus, the third son of John, son of Angus Og, married the daughter of John, the son of Allan, which connexion caused some disagreement betwixt the two families about their marches and division of lands, the one party adhering to Angus, and the other to John: the differences increased so much, that John obtained from Allan all the lands betwixt *Abhan Fahda*, (*i. e.* the long river) and *ald na sionnach* (*i. e.* the fox-burn brook), in the upper part of Cantyre. Allan went to the king to complain of his son-in-law; in a short time thereafter, there happened to be a great meeting about this young Angus's lands to the north of Inverness, where he was murdered by his own harper, Mac-Cairbre, by cutting his throat with a long knife. He* lived a year thereafter, and many of those concerned were delivered up to the king. Angus's wife was pregnant at the time of his murder, and she bore him a son, who was named Donald, and called Donald Du. He was kept in confinement until he was thirty years of age, when he was released by the men of Glencoe, by the strong hand. After this enlargement, he came to the Isles, and convened the gentry thereof. There happened great feuds betwixt these families while Donald Du was in confinement, insomuch that Mac-Cean of Ardnamurchan destroyed the greatest part of the posterity of John Mor, of the Isles and Cantyre. For John Cathanach, son of John, son of Donald Ballach, son of John Mor, son of John, son of Angus Og, (the chief of the descendants of John Mor,) and John Mor, son of John Cathanach, and young John, son of John Cathanach, and young Donald Ballach, son of John Cathanach, were treacherously taken by Mac-Cean in the island of Finlagan, in Isla, and carried to Edinburgh, where he got them hanged at the Burrowmuir, and their bodies were buried in the church of St. Anthony, called the New Church. There were none left alive at that time of the children of John Cathanach, except Alexander, the son of John Cathanach, and Agnes Flach, who concealed themselves in the glens of Ireland. Mac-Cean, hearing of their hiding-places, went to cut down the woods of these glens, in order to destroy Alexander and extirpate the whole race. At length Mac-Cean and Alexander met, were reconciled, and a marriage alliance took place; Alexander married Mac-Cean's daughter, and she brought him good children. The Mac-Donalds of the north had also descendants; for, after the death of John, lord of the Isles, and earl of Ross, and the murder of Angus, Alexander, the son of Archibald, the son of Alexander of the Isles, took possession, and John was in possession of the earldom of Ross, and the north bordering country; he married a daughter of the earl of Moray, of whom some of the men of the north had descended. The Mac-Kenzies rose against Alexander, and fought the battle called *Blar na Paire*. Alexander had only a few of the men of Ross at the battle. He went after that battle to take possession of the Isles, and sailed in a ship to the south to see if he could find any of the posterity of John Mor alive, to rise along with him, but Mac-Cean of Ardnamurchan watched him as he sailed past, followed him to Oransay, and Colonsay, went to the house where he was, and he and Alexander, son of John Cathanach, murdered him there.

"A good while after these things fell out, Donald Galda, son of Alexander, son of Archibald, became major; he, with the advice and direction of the earl of Moray, came to the Isles, and Mac-Leod of the Lewis, and many of the gentry of the Isles, rose with him: they went by the promontory of Ardnamurchan, where they met Alexander, the son of John Cathanach, were reconciled to him, he joined his men with theirs against Mac-Cean of Ardnamurchan, came upon him at a place called the Silver Craig, where he and his three sons, and a great number of his people, were killed, and Donald Galda was immediately declared Mac-Donald: and, after the affair of Ardnamurchan, all the men of the Isles yielded to him, but he did not live above seven or eight weeks after it; he died at Carnaborg, in Mull, without issue. He had three sisters, daughters of Alexander, son of Archibald, who were portioned in the north upon the continent, but the earldom of Ross was kept for them. Alexander the son of Archibald, had a natural son, called John Cam, of whom is descended Achnacoichan, in Ramoch, and Donald Gorm, son of Ronald, son of Alexander Duson, of John Cam. Donald Du, son of Angus, son of John of the Isles, son of Alexander of the Isles, son of Donald of the Isles, son of John of the Isles, son of Angus Og, namely, the true heir of the Isles and Ross, came after his release from captivity to the Isles, and convened the men thereof, and he and the earl of Lennox agreed to raise a great army for the purpose of taking possession, and a ship came from England with a supply of money to carry on the war, which landed at Mull, and the money was given to Mac-Lean of Duart to be distributed among the commanders of the army, which they not receiving in proportion as it should have been distributed among them, caused the army to disperse, which, when the earl of Lennox heard, he disbanded his own men, and made it up with the king: Mac-Donald went to Ireland to raise men, but he died on his way to Dublin, at Drogheda, of a fever, without issue of either sons or daughters."

In this history may be traced, though the bard or seannachie touches such a delicate discussion with a gentle hand, the point of difference between the three principal septs descended from the lords of the Isles. The first question, and one of no easy solution, where so little evidence is produced, respects the nature of the connexion of John, called by the archdean of the Isles "the good John of Ila," and "the last lord of the Isles," with Anne, daughter of Roderick Mac-Dougal, high chief of Lorn. In the absence of positive evidence, presumptive must be resorted to, and I own it appears to render it in the highest degree improbable that this connexion was otherwise than legitimate. In the wars between David II and Edward Baliol, John of the Isles espoused the Baliol interest, to which he was probably determined by his alliance with Roderick of Lorn, who was, from every family predilection, friendly to Baliol and hostile to

* The murderer I presume, not the man who was murdered.

Bruce. It seems absurd to suppose, that between two chiefs of the same descent, and nearly equal power and rank (though the Mac-Dougals had been much crushed by Robert Bruce,) such a connection should have been that of concubinage; and it appears more likely that the tempting offer of an alliance with the Bruce family, when they had obtained the decided superiority in Scotland, induced "the good John of Ila" to disinherit to a certain extent his eldest son Ronald, who came of a stock so unpopular as the Mac-Dougals, and to call to his succession his younger family, born of Margaret Stuart, daughter of Robert, afterwards king of Scotland. The setting aside of this elder branch of his family was most probably a condition of his new alliance, and his being received into favour with the dynasty he had always opposed. Nor were the laws of succession at this early period so clearly understood as to bar such transactions. The numerous and strange claims set up to the crown of Scotland, when vacant by the death of Alexander III, make it manifest how very little the indefeasible hereditary right of primogeniture was valued at that period. In fact, the title of the Bruces themselves to the crown, though justly the most popular, when assumed with the determination of asserting the independence of Scotland, was, upon pure principle, greatly inferior to that of Baliol. For Bruce, the competitor, claimed as son of Isabella, *second* daughter of David, earl of Huntingdon, and John Baliol, as grandson of Margaret, the elder daughter of that same earl. So that the plea of Bruce was founded upon the very loose idea, that, as the great grandson of David I, king of Scotland, and the nearest collateral relation of Alexander III, he was entitled to succeed, in exclusion of the great great grandson of the same David, though by an elder daughter. This maxim savoured of the ancient practice of Scotland, which often called a brother to succeed to the crown as nearer in blood than a grand-child, or even a son of a deceased monarch. But, in truth, the maxims of inheritance in Scotland were sometimes departed from at periods when they were much more distinctly understood. Such a transposition took place in the family of Hamilton, in 1513, when the descendants of James, 3d lord, by lady Janet Home, were set aside, with an appanage of great value indeed, in order to call to the succession those which he had by a subsequent marriage with Janet Beaton. In short, many other examples might be quoted to show that the question of legitimacy is not always determined by the fact of succession; and there seems reason to believe that Ronald, descendant of "John of Ila," by Ann of Lorn, was legitimate, and therefore lord of the Isles *de jure*, though *de facto* his younger half brother, Donald, son of his father's second marriage with the princess of Scotland, superseded him in his right, and apparently by his own consent. From this Donald so preferred is descended the family of Sleate, now lords Mac-Donald. On the other hand, from Ronald, the excluded heir, upon whom a very large appanage was settled, descended the chiefs of Glengary and Clanronald, each of whom had large possessions, and a numerous vassalage, and boasted a long descent of warlike ancestry. Their common ancestor, Ronald, was murdered by the earl of Ross at the monastery of Elcho, A. D. 1346. I believe it has been subject of fierce dispute, whether Donald, who carried on the line of Glengary, or Allan of Moidart, the ancestors of the captains of Clanronald, was the eldest son of Ronald, the son of John of Ila. A humble lowlander may be permitted to waive the discussion, since a seannachie of no small note, who wrote in the 16th century, expresses himself upon this delicate topic in the following words:—

"I have now given you an account of every thing you can expect of the descendants of the clan Colla, (*i. e.* the Mac-Donalds,) to the death of Donald Du at Drogheda, namely, the true line of those who possessed the Isles, Ross, and the mountainous countries of Scotland. It was Donald, the son of Angus, that was killed at Inverness, by his own harper (Mac-i'Cairbre,) son of John of the Isles, son of Alexander, son of Donald, son of John, son of Angus Og. And I know not which of his kindred or relations is the true heir, except these five sons of John, the son of Angus Og, whom I here set down for you, namely, Ronald and Godfrey, the two sons of the daughter of Mac-Donald of Lorn, and Donald and John Mor, and Alexander Carrach, the three sons of Margaret Stewart, daughter of Robert Stewart, king of Scotland."—*Leabhar Dearg.*

8. ——the house of Lorn.—P. 252.

The house of Lorn, as we observed in a former note, was, like the lords of the Isles, descended from a son of Somerled, slain at Renfrew, in 1164. This son obtained the succession of his mainland territories, comprehending the greater part of the three districts of Lorn, in Argyleshire, and of course might rather be considered as petty princes than fendal barons. They assumed the patronymic appellation of Mac-Dougal, by which they are distinguished in the history of the middle ages. The lord of Lorn, who flourished during the wars of Bruce, was Allaster (or Alexander) Mac-Dougal, called Allaster of Argyle. He had married the third daughter of John, called the Red Comyn,* who was slain by Bruce in the Dominican church at Dumfries, and hence he was a mortal enemy of that prince, and more than once reduced him to great straits during the early and distressed period of his reign, as we shall have repeated occasion to notice. Bruce, when he began to obtain an ascendency in Scotland, took the first opportunity in his power to requite these injuries. He marched into Argyleshire to lay waste the country. John of Lorn, son of the chieftain, was posted with his followers in the formidable pass between Dalmally and Bunawe. It is a narrow path along the verge of the huge and precipitous mountain, called Cruachan Ben, and guarded on the other side by a precipice overhanging Loch Awe. The pass seems to the eye of a soldier as strong, as it is wild and romantic to that of an ordinary traveller. But the skill of Bruce had anticipated this difficulty. While his main body, engaged in a skirmish with the men of Lorn, detained their attention to the front of their position, James of Douglas, with sir Alexander Fraser, sir William Wiseman, and sir Andrew Grey, ascended the mountain with a se-

* The aunt, according to lord Hailes. But the genealogy is distinctly given by Wintoun:—

The third daughter of Red Comyn,
Alysander of Argyle syne,
Took and wedded til his wife,
And on her he gat until his life,
John of Lorn, the whilk gat
Ewen of Lorn after that.
Wintoun's Chronicle, Book viii, c. vi, line 206.

lect body of archery, and obtained possession of the heights which commanded the pass. A volley of arrows descending upon them directly warned the Argyleshire men of their perilous situation, and their resistance, which had hitherto been bold and manly, was changed into a precipitate flight. The deep and rapid river of Awe was then (we learn the fact from Barbour with some surprise) crossed by a bridge. This bridge the mountaineers attempted to demolish, but Bruce's followers were too close upon their rear: they were, therefore, without refuge and defence, and were dispersed with great slaughter. John of Lorn, suspicious of the event, had early betaken himself to the galleys which he had upon the lake; but the feelings which Barbour assigns to him, while witnessing the rout and slaughter of his followers, exculpate him from the charge of cowardice.

> "To John of Lorn it should displease,
> I trow, when he his men might see
> Be slain and chased in the hill,
> That he might set no help theretill.
> But it angers as greatumly
> To good hearts that are worthy,
> To see their foes fulfill their will
> As to themselves to tholl the ill."——

After this decisive engagement, Bruce laid waste Argyleshire, and besieged Dunstaffnage castle, on the western shore of Lorn, compelled it to surrender, and placed in that principal strong-hold of the Mac-Dougals a garrison and governor of his own. The elder Mac-Dougal, now wearied with the contest, submitted to the victor: but his son, "rebellious," says Barbour, "as he wont to be," fled to England by sea. When the wars between the Bruce and Baliol factions again broke out in the reign of David II, the lords of Lorn were again found upon the losing side, owing to their hereditary enmity to the house of Bruce. Accordingly, upon the issue of that contest, they were deprived by David II and his successor of by far the greater part of their extensive territories, which were conferred upon Stewart, called the knight of Lorn. The house of Mac-Dougal, continued, however, to survive the loss of power, and affords a very rare, if not an unique, instance of a family of such unlimited power, and so distinguished during the middle ages, surviving the decay of their grandeur, and flourishing in a private station. The castle of Dunolly, near Oban, with its dependencies, was the principal part of what remained to them, with their right of chieftainship over the families of their name and blood. These they continued to enjoy until the year 1715, when the representative incurred the penalty of forfeiture, for his accession to the insurrection of that period; thus losing the remains of his inheritance, to replace upon the throne the descendants of those princes, whose accession his ancestors had opposed at the expense of their feudal grandeur. The estate was, however, restored about 1745, to the father of the present proprietor, whom family experience had taught the hazard of interfering with the established government, and who remained quiet upon that occasion. He therefore regained his property when many highland chiefs lost theirs.

Nothing can be more wildly beautiful than the situation of Dunolly. The ruins are situated upon a bold and precipitous promontory, overhanging Loch Etive, and distant about a mile from the village and port of Oban. The principal part which remains is the donjon or keep; but fragments of other buildings, overgrown with ivy, attest that it had once been a place of importance, as large apparently as Artornish or Dunstaffnage. These fragments inclose a court-yard, of which the keep probably formed one side; the entrance being by a steep ascent from the neck of the isthmus, formerly cut across by a moat, and defended doubtless by outworks and a draw-bridge. Beneath the castle stands the present mansion of the family, having on the one hand Loch Etive, with its islands and mountains, on the other two romantic eminences tufted with copse-wood. There are other accompaniments suited to the scene, in particular a huge upright pillar, or detached fragment of that sort of rock called plum-pudding stone, upon the shore, about a quarter of a mile from the castle. It is called *clach-na-cau*, or the dog's pillar, because Fingal is said to have used it as a stake to which he bound his celebrated dog Bran. Others say, that when the lord of the Isles came upon a visit to the lord of Lorn, the dogs brought for his sport were kept beside this pillar. Upon the whole, a more delightful and romantic spot can scarce be conceived; and it receives a moral interest from the considerations attached to the residence of a family, once powerful enough to confront and defeat Robert Bruce, and now sunk into the shade of private life. It is at present possessed by Patrick M'Dougal, esq., the lineal and undisputed representative of the ancient lords of Lorn. The heir of Dunolly fell lately in Spain, fighting under the duke of Wellington,—a death well becoming his ancestry.

9. Those lightnings of the wave.—P. 254.

The phenomenon called by sailors Sea-fire, is one of the most beautiful and interesting which is witnessed in the Hebrides: at times the ocean appears entirely illuminated around the vessel, and a long train of lambent coruscations are perpetually bursting upon the sides of the vessel, or pursuing her wake through the darkness. These phosphoric appearances, concerning the origin of which naturalists are not agreed in opinion, seem to be called into action by the rapid motion of the ship through the water, and are probably owing to the water being saturated with fish-spawn, or other animal substances. They remind one strongly of the description of the sea-snakes in Mr. Coleridge's wild, but highly poetical ballad of the Ancient Mariner:—

> "Beyond the shadow of the ship
> I watched the water-snakes,
> They moved in tracks of shining white,
> And when they reared, the elvish light
> Fell off in hoary flakes."

10. Hewn in the rock, a passage there
Sought the dark fortress by a stair
So straight, so high, so steep,
With peasant's staff one valiant hand
Might well the dizzy pass have manned,
'Gainst hundreds armed with spear and brand,
And plunged them in the deep.—P. 254.

The fortress of a Hebridean chief was almost always on the sea-shore, for the facility or communication which the ocean afforded. Nothing can be more wild than the situations which they chose, and the devices by which the architects endeavoured to defend them. Narrow stairs and arched vaults were the usual mode of access, and the drawbridge appears at Dunstaffnage, and elsewhere, to have fallen from the gate of the building to the top of such a staircase; so that any one, advancing with hostile purpose, found himself in a state of exposed and precarious elevation, with a gulf between him and the object of his attack.

These fortresses were guarded with equal care. The duty of the watch devolved chiefly upon an officer called the Cockman, who had the charge of challenging all who approached the castle. The very ancient family of Macneil of Barra kept this attendant at their castle about an hundred years ago. Martin gives the following account of the difficulty which attended his procuring entrance there:—

"The little island Kismul lies about a quarter of a mile from the south of this isle, (Barra;) it is the seat of Macneil of Barra; there is a stone-wall round it two stories high, reaching the sea; and within the wall there is an old tower and an hall, with other houses about it. There is a little magazine in the tower, to which no stranger has access. I saw the officer called the Cockman, and an old cock he is; when I bid him ferry me over the water to the island, he told me that he was but an inferior officer, his business being to attend in the tower; but if (says he) the constable, who then stood on the wall, will give you access, I'll ferry you over. I desired him to procure me the constable's permission, and I would reward him; but having waited some hours for the constable's answer, and not receiving any, I was obliged to return without seeing this famous fort. Macneil and his lady being absent, was the cause of this difficulty, and of my not seeing the place. I was told, some weeks after, that the constable was very apprehensive of some design I might have in viewing the fort, and thereby to expose it to the conquest of a foreign power; of which I supposed there was no great cause of fear."

NOTES TO CANTO II.

1. ———De Argentine.—P. 256.

Sir Egidius, or Giles de Argentine, was one of the most accomplished knights of the period. He had served in the wars of Henry of Luxemberg with such high reputation, that he was, in popular estimation, the third worthy of the age. Those to whom fame assigned precedence over him were, Henry of Luxemberg himself, and Robert Bruce. Argentine had warred in Palestine, encountered thrice with the Saracens, and had slain two antagonists in each engagement. An easy matter, he said, for one christian knight to slay two pagan dogs. His death corresponded with his high character. With Aymer de Valence, earl of Pembroke, he was appointed to attend immediately upon the person of Edward II. When the day was utterly lost, they forced the king from the field. De Argentine saw the king safe from immediate danger, and then took his leave of him: "God be with you, sir," he said, "it is not my wont to fly." So saying, he turned his horse, cried his war-cry, plunged into the midst of the combatants, and was slain. Baston, a rhyming monk who had been brought by Edward to celebrate his expected triumph, and who was compelled by the victors to compose a poem on his defeat, mentions with some feeling the death of sir Giles de Argentine:—

Nobilis Argenten, pugil inclyte, dulcis Egidi,
Vix scieram mentem cum te succumbere vidi.

"The first line mentions the three chief requisites of a true knight—noble birth, valor, and courteousness. Few Leonine couplets can be produced that have so much sentiment. I wish that I could have collected more ample memorials concerning a character altogether different from modern manners. Sir Giles de Argentine was a hero of romance in real life." So observes the excellent lord Hailes.

2. "Fill me the mighty cup!" he said,
"Erst owned by royal Somerled."—P. 256.

A Hebridean drinking-cup, of the most ancient and curious workmanship, has been long preserved in the castle of Dunvegan, in Skye, the romantic seat of Mac-Leod, of Mac-Leod, the chief of that ancient and powerful clan. The horn of Rorie More, preserved in the same family, and recorded by Dr. Johnson, is not to be compared with this piece of antiquity, which is one of the greatest curiosities in Scotland. The following is a pretty accurate description of its shape and dimensions, but cannot, I fear, be perfectly understood without a drawing.

This very curious piece of antiquity is nine inches and three-quarters in inside depth, and ten and a half in height on the outside, the extreme measure over the lips being four inches and a half. The cup is divided into two parts by a wrought ledge, beautifully ornamented, about three-fourths of an inch in breadth. Beneath this ledge the shape of the cup is rounded off, and terminates in a flat circle, like that of a tea-cup; four short feet support the whole. Above the projecting ledge the shape of the cup is nearly square, projecting outward at the brim. The cup is made of wood, (oak to all appearance,) but most curiously wrought and embossed with silver work, which projects from the vessel. There are a number of regular projecting sockets, which appear to have been set with stones; two or three of them still hold pieces of coral, the rest are empty. At the four corners of the projecting ledge or cornice, are four sockets, much larger, probably for pebbles or precious stones. The workmanship of the silver is extremely elegant, and appears to have been highly gilded. The ledge, brim, and legs of the cup, are of silver. The family tradition bears that it was the property of Neil Ghlune-dhu, or Black-knee. But who this Neil was, no one pretends to say. Around the edge of the cup is a legend, perfectly legible, in the Saxon black letter, which may be read at length thus:—

Ufo Johanis Mich Magni Principis de Hr Manae Vich Liahia Magryneil et sperat Domino Ihesu dari clementiam illorum opera. Fecit Anno Domini 993 *Onili Oimi.* Which may run in English: Ufo, the son of John, the son of Magnus, prince of Man, the grandson of Liahia Macgryneil, trusts in the Lord Jesus that their works (*i. e.* his own and those of his ancestors) will obtain mercy. Oneil Oimi made this in the year of God nine hundred and ninety-three.

But this version does not include the puzzling letters HR before the word Manae. Within the mouth of the cup the word Jesus is repeated four times. From this and other circumstances it would seem to have been a chalice. This circumstance may perhaps account for the use of two Arabic numerals, 93. These figures were introduced by pope Sylvester, A. D. 991, and might be used in a vessel formed for church service so early as 993. The workmanship of the whole cup is extremely elegant, and resembles, I am told, antiques of the same nature preserved in Ireland.

The cups thus elegantly formed, and highly valued, were by no means utensils of mere show. Martin gives the following account of the festivals of his time, and I have heard similar instances of brutality in the lowlands at no very distant period

"The manner of drinking used by the chief men of the Isles is called in their language Streah, *i. e.* a Round; for the company sat in a circle, the cup-bearer filled the drink round to them, and all was drank out, whatever the liquor was, whether strong or weak; they continued drinking sometimes twenty-four, sometimes forty-eight hours. It was reckoned a piece of manhood to drink until they became drunk, and there were two men with a barrow attending punctually on such occasions. They stood at the door until some became drunk, and they carryed them upon the barrow to bed, and returned again to their post as long as any continued fresh, and so carried off the whole company, one by one, as they became drunk. Several of my acquaintance have been witnesses to this custom of drinking, but it is now abolished."

This savage custom was not entirely done away within the last generation. I have heard of a gentleman who happened to be a water-drinker, and was permitted to abstain from the strong potations of the company. The bearers carried away one man after another, till no one was left but this Scottish mirg-lip. They then came to do him the same good office, which, however, he declined as unnecessary, and proposed to walk to his bed-room. It was a permission he could not obtain. Never such a thing had happened, they said, in the castle! that it was impossible but he must require their assistance, at any rate he must submit to receive it; and carried him off in the barrow accordingly. A classical penalty was sometimes imposed on those who baulked the rules of good fellowship by evading their share of the banquet. The same author continues:—

"Amongst persons of distinction it was reckoned an affront put upon any company to broach a piece of wine, ale, or aquavitæ, and not to see it all drank out at one meeting. If any man chance to go out from the company, though but for a few minutes, he is obliged, upon his return, and before he take his seat, to make an apology for his absence in rhyme; which if he cannot perform, he is liable to such a share of the reckoning as the company thinks fit to impose: which custom obtains in many places still, and is called bianchiz bard, which, in their language, signifies the poet's congratulating the company."

Few cups were better, at least more actively, employed in the rude hospitality of the period, than those of Dunvegan; one of which we have just described. There is in the Leabhar Dearg, a song, intimating the overflowing gratitude of a bard of Clan-Ronald, after the exuberance of a Hebridean festival at the patriarchal fortress of Mac-Leod. The translation being obviously very literal, has greatly flattened, as I am informed, the enthusiastic gratitude of the ancient bard; and it must be owned that the works of Homer or Virgil, to say nothing of Mac-Vuirich, might have suffered by their transfusion through such a medium. It is pretty plain, that when the tribute of poetical praise was bestowed, the horn of Rorie More had not been inactive.

Upon sir Rodric Mor Macleod, by Niall Mor Mac-Vuirich.

"The six nights I remained in the Dunvegan, it was not a show of hospitality I met with there, but a plentiful feast in thy fair hall among thy numerous host of heroes.

"The family placed all around under the protection of their great chief, raised by his prosperity and respect for his warlike feats, now enjoying the company of his friends at the feast,—amidst the sound of harps, overflowing cups, and happy youth unaccustomed to guile, or feud, partaking of the generous fare by a flaming fire.

"Mighty chief, liberal to all your princely mansion, filled with your numerous warlike host, whose generous wine would overcome the hardiest heroes, yet we continued to enjoy the feast, so happy our host, so generous our fare."—*Translated by D. Mac-Intosh.*

It would be unpardonable in a modern bard, who has experienced the hospitality of Dunvegan castle in the present day, to omit paying his own tribute of gratitude for a reception more elegant indeed, but not less kindly sincere, than sir Roderick More himself could have afforded. But Johnson has already described a similar scene in the same ancient patriarchal residence of the lords of Mac-Leod.

"Whatever is imaged in the wildest tales, if giants, dragons, and enchantment be excepted, would be felt by him, who, wandering in the mountains without a guide, or upon the sea without a pilot, should be carried, amidst his terror and uncertainty, to the hospitality and elegance of Raasay or Dunvegan."

3. With solemn step, and silver wand,
The seneschal the presence scanned
Of these strange guests.—P. 256.

The sewer, to whom, rather than the seneschal, the office of arranging the guests of an island chief appertained, was an officer of importance in the family of an Hebridean chief.

"Every family had commonly two stewards, which, in their language, were called marischall tach: the first of these served always at home, and was obliged to be versed in the pedigree of all the tribes in the Isles, and in the highlands of Scotland; for it was his province to assign every man at table his seat according to his quality; and this was done without one word speaking, only by drawing a score with a white rod, which this marischall held in his hand, before the person who was bid by him to sit down: and this was necessary to prevent disorder and contention; and though the marischall might sometimes be mistaken, the master of the family incurred no censure by such an escape; but this custom has been laid aside of late. They had also cup-bearers, who always filled and carried the cup round the company, and he himself always drank off the first draught. They had likewise purse-masters, who kept their money. Both these officers had an hereditary right to their office in writing, and each of them had a town and land for his service; some of those rights I have seen fairly written on good parchment."—*Martin's Western Isles.*

4. ——— the rebellious Scottish crew,
Who to Rath-Erin's shelter drew,
With Carrick's outlawed chief.—P. 256.

It must be remembered by all who have read the Scottish history, that after he had slain Comyn at Dumfries, and asserted his right to the Scottish crown, Robert Bruce was reduced to the greatest extremity by the English and their adherents. He was crowned at Scone by the general consent of the Scottish barons, but his authority endured but a short time. According to the phrase said to have been used by his wife, he was for that year "a

summer king, but not a winter one." On the 29th March, 1306, he was crowned king at Scone. Upon the 19th June, in the same year, he was totally defeated at Methven, near Perth; and his most important adherents, with a few exceptions, either executed, or compelled to embrace the English interest, for safety of their lives and fortunes. After this disaster, his life was that of an outlaw, rather than a candidate for monarchy. He separated himself from the females of his retinue, whom he sent for safety to the castle of Kildrummie, in Aberdeenshire, where they afterward became captives to England. From Aberdeenshire, Bruce retreated to the mountainous parts of Breadalbane, and approached the borders of Argyleshire. There, as mentioned in a preceding, and more fully in a subsequent note, he was defeated by the lord of Lorn, who had assumed arms against him in revenge of the death of his relative, John the Red Comyn. Escaped from this peril, Bruce, with his few attendants, subsisted by hunting and fishing, until the weather compelled them to seek better sustenance and shelter than the highland mountains afforded. With great difficulty they crossed, from Rowardennan probably, to the western banks of Loch Lomond, partly in a miserable boat, and partly by swimming. The valiant and loyal earl of Lennox, to whose territories they had now found their way, welcomed them with tears, but was unable to assist them to make an effectual head. The lord of the Isles, then in possession of great part of Cantyre, received the fugitive monarch and future restorer of his country's independence, in his castle of Dunnaverty, in that district. But treason, says Barbour, was so general, that the king durst not abide there. Accordingly, with the remnant of his followers, Bruce embarked for Rath-Erin, or Rachrine, the Recina of Ptolemy, a small island, lying almost opposite to the shores of Ballycastle, on the coast of Ireland. The islanders at first fled from their new and armed guests, but upon some explanation submitted themselves to Bruce's sovereignty. He resided among them until the approach of spring, (1306,) when he again returned to Scotland, with the desperate resolution to reconquer his kingdom, or perish in the attempt. The progress of his success, from its commencement to its completion, forms the brightest period in Scottish history.

5. The Broach of Lorn.—P. 257.

It has been generally mentioned in the preceding notes, that Robert Bruce, after his defeat at Methven, being hard pressed by the English, endeavoured, with the dispirited remnant of his followers, to escape from Breadalbane and the mountains of Perthshire into the Argyleshire highlands. But he was encountered and repulsed, after a very severe engagement, by the lord of Lorn. Bruce's personal strength and courage were never displayed to greater advantage than in this conflict. There is a tradition in the family of the Mac-Dougals of Lorn, that their chieftain engaged in personal battle with Bruce himself, while the latter was employed in protecting the retreat of his men; that Mac-Dougal was struck down by the king, whose strength of body was equal to his vigour of mind, and would have been slain on the spot, had not two of Lorn's vassals, a father and son, whom tradition terms Mac-Keoch, rescued him, by seizing the mantle of the monarch, and dragging him from above his adversary. Bruce rid himself of these foes by two blows of his redoubted battle-axe, but was so closely pressed by the other followers of Lorn, that he was forced to abandon the mantle, and broach which fastened it, clasped in the dying grasp of the Mac-Keochs. A studded broach, said to have been that which king Robert lost upon this occasion, was long preserved in the family of Mac-Dougal, and was lost in a fire which consumed their temporary residence.

The metrical history of Barbour throws an air of credibility upon the tradition, although it does not entirely coincide either in the names or number of the vassals by whom Bruce was assailed, and makes no mention of the personal danger of Lorn, or of the loss of Bruce's mantle. The last circumstance, indeed, might be warrantably omitted.

According to Barbour, the king, with his handful of followers, not amounting probably to three hundred men, encountered Lorn with about a thousand Argyleshire men in Glen-Douchart, at the head of Breadalbane, near Teyndrum. The place of action is still called Dalry, or the king's field. The field of battle was unfavourable to Bruce's adherents, who were chiefly men-at-arms. Many of the horses were slain by the long pole-axes, of which the Argyleshire Scottish had learned the use from the Norwegians. At length Bruce commanded a retreat up a narrow and difficult pass, he himself bringing up the rear, and repeatedly turning and driving back the more venturous assailants. Lorn, observing the skill and valour used by his enemy in protecting the retreat of his followers, "Methinks, Murthokson," said he, addressing one of his followers, "he resembles Golmac-morn, protecting his followers from Fingal." —A most unworthy comparison, observes the archdeacon of Aberdeen, unsuspicious of the future fame of these names; he might with more propriety have compared the king to sir Gaudefer de Larys, protecting the foragers of Gadyrs against the attacks of Alexander.* Two brothers, the strongest among Lorn's followers, whose names Barbour calls Mackyn-Drosser (interpreted Durward, or Porterson,) resolved to rid their chief of this formidable foe. A third person (perhaps the Mac-Keoch of the family tradition) associated himself with them for this purpose. They watched their opportunity until Bruce's party had entered a pass between a lake (Loch-Dochart probably) and a precipice, where the king, who was the last of the party, had scarce room to manage his steed. Here his three foes sprung upon him at once. One seized his bridle, but received a wound which hewed off his arm; a second grasped Bruce by the stirrup and leg, and endeavoured to dismount him, but the king, putting spurs to his horse, threw him down, still holding by the stirrup. The third, taking advantage of an acclivity, sprung up behind him upon his horse. Bruce, however, whose personal strength is uniformly mentioned as exceeding that of most men, extricated himself from his grasp, threw him to the ground, and cleft his skull with his sword. By similar exertion he drew the stirrup from his grasp whom he had overthrown,

* This is a very curious passage, and has been often quoted in the Ossianic controversy. That it refers to ancient Celtic tradition, there can be no doubt, and as little that it refers to no incident in the poems published by Mr. Macpherson as from the Gaelic. The hero of romance, whom Barbour thinks a more proper prototype for the Bruce, occurs in the romance of Alexander, of which there is an unique translation into Scottish verse in the library of the honourable Mr. Maule, of Panmure.—See *Weber's Romances*, vol. i, *Appendix to Introduction*, p. lxxiii.

and killed him also with his sword as he lay among the horse's feet. The story seems romantic, but this was the age of romantic exploit; and it must be remembered that Bruce was armed cap-a-pie, and the assailants were half-clad mountaineers. Barbour adds the following circumstance, highly characteristic of the sentiments of chivalry. Mac-Naughton, a baron of Cowal, pointed out to the lord of Lorn the deeds of valour which Bruce performed in this memorable retreat, with the highest expressions of admiration. "It seems to give thee pleasure," said Lorn, "that he makes such havoc among our friends."—"Not so, by my faith," replied Mac-Naughton; "but be he friend or foe who achieves high deeds of chivalry, men should bear faithful witness to his valour; and never have I heard of one, who, by his knightly feats, has extricated himself from such dangers as have this day surrounded Bruce."

6. Wrought and chased with rare device,
Studded fair with gems of price.—P. 257.

Great art and expense was bestowed upon the *fibula*, or broach, which secured the plaid, when the wearer was a person of importance. Martin mentions having seen a silver broach of an hundred marks value.

"It was broad as any ordinary pewter plate, the whole curiously engraven with various animals, &c. There was a lesser buckle, which was more in the middle of the larger, and above two ounces weight; it had in the centre a large piece of crystal, or some finer stone, and this was set all round with several finer stones of a lesser size."—*Western Islands.*

Pennant has given an engraving of such a broach as Martin describes, and the workmanship of which is very elegant. It is said to have belonged to the family of Lochbuy.—See PENNANT'S *Tour*, vol. iii, p. 14.

7. Vain was then the Douglas brand,
Vain the Campbell's vaunted hand.—P. 257.

The gallant sir James, called the good lord Douglas, the most faithful and valiant of Bruce's adherents, was wounded at the battle of Dalry. Sir Nigel, or Niel Campbell, was also in that unfortunate skirmish. He married Marjorie, sister to Robert Bruce, and was among his most faithful followers. In a manuscript account of the house of Argyle, supplied, it would seem, as materials for archbishop Spottiswoode's History of the Church of Scotland, I find the following passage concerning sir Niel Campbell:—"Moreover, when all the nobles in Scotland had left king Robert after his hard success, yet this noble knight was most faithful, and shrinked not, as it is to be seen in an indenture bearing these words:—'Memorandum quod cum ab incarnatione Domini 1308 conventum fuit et concordatum inter nobiles viros Dominum Alexandrum de Seatoun militem et Dominum Gilbertum de Haye militem et Dominum Nigellum Campbell militem apud monasterium de Cambuskenneth 9° Septembris qui tacta sancta eucharista, magnoque juramento facto, jurarunt se debere libertatem regni et Robertum nuper regem coronatum contra omnes mortales, Francos, Anglos, Scotos, defendere usque ad ultimum terminum vitæ ipsorum.' Their scales are appended to the indenture in greene wax, togithir with the seal of Gulfrid, abbot of Cambuskenneth."

8. Vain Kirkpatrick's bloody dirk,
Making sure of murder's work.—P. 257.

Every reader must recollect that the proximate cause of Bruce's asserting his right to the crown of Scotland, was the death of John, called the Red Comyn. The cause of this act of violence, equally extraordinary from the high rank both of the perpetrator and sufferer, and from the place where the slaughter was committed, are variously related by the Scottish and English historians, and cannot now be ascertained. The fact that they met at the high altar of the Minorites or Grey-Friars' church in Dumfries, that their difference broke out into high and insulting language, and that Bruce drew his dagger and stabbed Comyn, is certain. Rushing to the door of the church, Bruce met two powerful barons, Kirkpatrick of Closeburn, and James de Lindsay, who eagerly asked him what tidings? "Bad tidings," answered Bruce, "I doubt I have slain Comyn." "Doubtest thou?" said Kirkpatrick; "I make sicker," (*i. e.*) sure. With these words, he and Lindsay rushed into the church, and despatched the wounded Comyn. The Kirkpatricks of Closeburn assumed, in memory of this deed, a hand holding a dagger, with the memorable words, "I make sicker." Some doubt having been started by the late lord Hailes as to the identity of the Kirkpatrick, who completed this day's work, with sir Roger, then representative of the ancient family of Closeburn, my kind and ingenious friend, Mr. Charles Kirkpatrick Sharpe, has furnished me with the following memorandum, which appears to fix the deed with his ancestor:—

"The circumstances of the regent Cummin's murder, from which the family of Kirkpatrick, in Nithsdale, is said to have derived its crest and motto, are well known to all conversant with Scottish history; but lord Hailes has started a doubt as to the authenticity of this tradition, when recording the murder of Roger Kirkpatrick, in his own castle of Caerlaverock, by sir James Lindsay. 'Fordun,' says his lordship, 'remarks that Lindsay and Kirkpatrick were the heirs of the two men who accompanied Robert Brus at the fatal conference with Comyn. If Fordun was rightly informed as to this particular, an argument arises in support of a notion which I have long entertained, that the person who struck his dagger in Comyn's heart was *not* the representative of the honourable family of Kirkpatrick, in Nithsdale. Roger de K. was made prisoner at the battle of Durham, in 1346. Roger de Kirkpatrick was alive on the 6th of August, 1357, for, on that day, Humphry, the son and heir of Roger de K. is proposed as one of the young gentlemen who were to be hostages for David Bruce. Roger de K. Miles was present at the parliament held at Edinburgh, 25th September, 1357; and he is mentioned as alive 3d October, 1357; (*Fœdera;*) it follows, of necessary consequence, that Roger de K. murdered in June, 1357, must have been a different person.'—*Annals of Scotland*, vol. ii, p. 242.

"To this it may be answered, that at the period of the regent's murder, there were only *two* families of the name of Kirkpatrick (nearly allied to each other) in existence—Stephen Kirkpatrick styled in the Chartulary of Kelso (1278,) *Dominus villæ de Closburn, filius et hæres Domini Ade de Kirkpatrick, Militis* (whose father, Ivone de Kirkpatrick, witnesses a charter of Robert Brus, lord of Annandale, before the year 1141,) had two sons, sir Roger, who carried on the line of Closeburn, and Duncan, who married Isobel, daughter and heiress

of sir David Torthorwald of that ilk; they had a charter of the lands of Torthorwald from king Robert Brus, dated the 10th August, the year being omitted—Umphray, the son of Duncan and Isobel, got a charter of Torthorwald from the king, 16th July, 1322—his son, Roger of Torthorwald, got a charter from John the Grahame, son of sir John Grahame of Mosskessen, of an annual rent of 40 shillings, out of the lands of Overdryft, 1355—his son, William Kirkpatrick, grants a charter to John of Garroch, of the twa merk land of Glengip and Garvellgill, within the tenement of Wamphray, 22d April, 1372. From this, it appears that the Torthorwald branch was not concerned in the affair of Comyn's murder, and the inflictions of Providence which ensued; Duncan Kirkpatrick, if we are to believe the blind minstrel, was the firm friend of Wallace, to whom he was related.

("Kirkpatrick, that cruel was and keyne,
In Esdaill wod that half zer he had been;
With Inglismen be couth nocht weill accord,
Of Torthorwald he baron was and lord,
Of kyn he was to Wallace modyr ner,") &c.

But this baron seems to have had no share in the adventures of king Robert; the crest of his family, as it still remains on a carved stone built into a cottage wall, in the village of Torthorwald, bears some resemblance, says Grose, to a rose.

"Universal tradition, and all our later historians, have attributed the regent's death-blow to sir Roger K. of Closeburn. The author of the MS. History of the Presbytery of Penpont, in the Advocates' Library, affirms, that the crest and motto were given by the king on that occasion; and proceeds to relate some circumstances respecting a grant to a cottager and his wife in the vicinity of Closeburn castle, which are certainly authentic, and strongly vouch for the truth of the other report.

"'The steep hill, (says he,) called the Dune of Tynron, of a considerable height, upon the top of which there hath been some habitation or fort. There have been in ancient times, on all hands of it, very thick woods, and great about that place, which made it the more inaccessible, into which K. Ro. Bruce is said to have been conducted by Roger Kirkpatrick of Closeburn, after they had killed the Cumin at Dumfries, which is nine miles from this place, whereabout it is probable that he did abide for some time thereafter; and it is reported, that, during his abode there, he did often divert to a poor man's cottage, named Brownrig, situate in a small parcel of stoney ground, incompassed with thick woods, where he was content sometimes with such mean accommodation as the place could afford. The poor man's wife being advised to petition the king for somewhat, was so modest in her desires, that she sought no more but security for the croft in her husband's possession, and a liberty of pasturage for a very few cattle of different kinds on the hill, and the rest of the bounds. Of which privilege that ancient family, by the injury of time, hath a long time been, and is deprived: but the croft continues in the possession of the heirs and successors lineally descended of this Brownrig and his wife: so that his family, being more ancient than rich, doth yet continue in the name, and, as they say, retains the old charter.'"—*MS. History of the Presbytery of Penpont, in the Advocates' Library of Edinburgh.*

9. Barendown fled fast away,
Fled the fiery de la Haye.—P. 257.

These knights are enumerated by Barbour among the small number of Bruce's adherents, who remained in arms with him after the battle of Methven.

"With him was a bold baron,
Schyr William the Baroundoun,
— — — —
Schyr Gilbert de la Haye alsua."

There were more than one of the noble family of Hay engaged in Bruce's cause; but the principal was Gilbert de la Haye, lord of Errol, a staunch adherent to king Robert's interest, and whom he rewarded by creating him hereditary lord high constable of Scotland, a title which he used 16th March, 1308, where, in a letter from the peers of Scotland to Philip the Fair of France, he is designed *Gilbertus de Hay, Constabularius Scotiæ.* He was slain at the battle of Halidon-hill. Hugh de la Haye, his brother, was made prisoner at the battle of Methven.

10. Well hast thou framed, old man, thy strains,
To praise the hand that pays thy pains.—P. 257.

The character of the highland bards, however high in an earlier period of society, seems soon to have degenerated. The Irish affirm, that in their kindred tribes severe laws became necessary to restrain their avarice. In the highlands they seem gradually to have sunk into contempt, as well as the orators, or men of speech, with whose office that of family poet was often united.

"The orators, in their language called Isdane, were in high esteem both in these islands and the continent; until within these forty years, they sat always among the nobles and chiefs of families in the streah, or circle. Their houses and little villages were sanctuaries, as well as churches, and they took place before doctors of physic. The orators, after the druids were extinct, were brought in to preserve the genealogy of families, and to repeat the same at every succession of chiefs; and upon the occasion of marriages and births, they made epithalamiums and panegyrics, which the poet or bard pronounced. The orators, by the force of their eloquence, had a powerful ascendant over the greatest men in their time; for if any orator did but ask the habit, arms, horse, or any other thing belonging to the greatest men in these islands, it was readily granted them, sometimes out of respect, and sometimes for fear of being exclaimed against by a satire, which, in those days, was reckoned a great dishonour. But these gentlemen, becoming insolent, lost ever since both the profit and esteem which was formerly due to their character; for neither their panegyrics nor satires are regarded to what they have been, and they are now allowed but a small salary. I must not omit to relate their way of study, which is very singular: They shut their doors and windows for a day's time, and lie on their backs, with a stone upon their belly, and plads about their heads, and their eyes being covered, they pump their brains for rhetorical encomium, or panegyric; and indeed they furnish such a style from this dark cell, as is understood by very few: and if they purchase a couple of horses as the reward of their meditation, they think they have done a great matter. The poet, or bard, had a title to the bridegroom's upper garb, that is, the plad and bonnet; but now he is satisfyed with what the bridegroom pleases to give him on such occasions."—MARTIN'S *Western Isles.*

11. Was't not enough to Ronald's bower
I brought thee, like a paramour.—P. 259.

It was anciently customary in the highlands to bring the bride to the house of the husband. Nay, in some cases, the complaisance was stretched so far, that she remained there upon trial for a twelvemonth; and the bridegroom, even after this period of cohabitation, retained an option of refusing to fulfil his engagement. It is said that a desperate feud ensued between the clans of Mac-Donald of Sleate and Mac-Leod, owing to the former chief having availed himself of this license to send back to Dunvegan, a sister, or daughter, of the latter. Mac-Leod, resenting the indignity, observed, that since there was no wedding bonfire, there should be one to solemnize the divorce. Accordingly, he burned and laid waste the territories of Mac-Donald, who retaliated, and a deadly feud, with all its accompaniments, took place in form.

12. Since matchless Wallace first had been
In mock'ry crowned with wreaths of green.—P. 259.

Stowe gives the following curious account of the trial and execution of this celebrated patriot:—"William Wallace, who had oft-times set Scotland in great trouble, was taken and brought to London, with great numbers of men and women wondering upon him. He was lodged in the house of William Delect, a citizen of London, in Fenchurch-street. On the morrow, being the eve of St. Bartholomew, he was brought on horseback to Westminster. John Legrave and Geffrey, knights, the mayor, sheriffs, and aldermen of London, and many others, both on horseback and on foot, accompanying him; and in the great hall at Westminster, he being placed on the south bench, crowned with laurel, for that he had said in times past that he ought to bear a crown in that hall, as it was commonly reported: and being appeached for a traitor by sir Peter Malorie, the king's justice, he answered, that he was never traitor to the king of England; but for other things whereof he was accused, he confessed them; and was after headed and quartered."—Stowe, *Chr.* p. 209.

There is something singularly doubtful about the mode in which Wallace was taken. That he was betrayed to the English is indubitable; and popular fame charges sir John Menteith with the indelible infamy. "Accursed," says Arnold Blair, "be the day of nativity of John de Menteith, and may his name be struck out of the book of life." But John de Menteith was all along a zealous favourer of the English interest, and was governor of Dumbarton castle by commission from Edward the first; and therefore, as the accurate lord Hailes has observed, could not be the friend and confidant of Wallace, as tradition states him to be. The truth seems to be, that Menteith, thoroughly engaged in the English interest, pursued Wallace closely, and made him prisoner through the treachery of an attendant, whom Peter Langtoft calls Jack Short.

William Waleis is nomen that master was of theves,
Tiding to the king is comen that robbery mischeivs,
Sir John of Menetest sued William so nigh,
He tok him when he weened least, on night, his leman him by,
That was through treason of *Jack Short* his man,
He was the encheson that sir John so him ran,
Jack's brother had he slain, the Waleis that is said,
The more Jack was fain to do William that braid.

From this it would appear that the infamy of seizing Wallace must rest between a degenerate Scottish nobleman, the vassal of England, and a domestic, the obscure agent of his treachery; between sir John Menteith, son of Walter, earl of Menteith, and the traitor Jack Short.

13. Where's Nigel Bruce? and De la Haye,
And valiant Seton—where are they?
Where Somerville, the kind and free?
And Fraser, flower of chivalry?—P. 259.

When these lines were written, the author was remote from the means of correcting his indistinct recollection concerning the individual fate of Bruce's followers, after the battle of Methven. Hugh de la Haye and Thomas Somerville of Lintoun and Cowdally, ancestor of lord Somerville, were both made prisoners at that defeat, but neither was executed.

Sir Nigel Bruce was the younger brother of Robert, to whom he committed the charge of his wife and daughter, Marjorie, and the defence of his strong castle of Kildrummie, near the head of the Don, in Aberdeenshire. Kildrummie long resisted the arms of the earls of Lancaster and Hereford, until the magazine was treacherously burnt. The garrison was then compelled to surrender at discretion, and Nigel Bruce, a youth remarkable for personal beauty, as well as for gallantry, fell into the hands of the unrelenting Edward. He was tried by a special commission at Berwick, was condemned, and executed.

Christopher Seatoun shared the same unfortunate fate. He also was distinguished by personal valour, and signalized himself in the fatal battle of Methven. Robert Bruce adventured his person in that battle like a knight of romance. He dismounted Aymer de Valence, earl of Pembroke, but was in his turn dismounted by sir Philip Mowbray. In this emergence Seatoun came to his aid, and remounted him. Langtoft mentions, that in this battle the Scottish wore white surplices, or shirts, over their armour, that those of rank might not be known. In this manner both Bruce and Seatoun escaped. But the latter was afterwards betrayed to the English, through means, according to Barbour, of one Mac-Nab, "a disciple of Judas," in whom the unfortunate knight reposed entire confidence. There was some peculiarity respecting his punishment; because, according to Matthew of Westminster, he was considered not as a Scottish subject, but an Englishman. He was therefore taken to Dumfries, where he was tried, condemned, and executed, for the murder of a soldier slain by him. His brother, John de Seton, had the same fate at Newcastle: both were considered as accomplices in the slaughter of Comyn, but in what manner they were particularly accessary to that deed does not appear.

The fate of sir Simon Fraser, or Frizel, ancestor of the family of Lovat, is dwelt upon at great length, and with savage exultation, by the English historians. This knight, who was renowned for personal gallantry and high deeds of chivalry, was also made prisoner, after a gallant defence, in the battle of Methven. Some stanzas of a ballad of the times, which, for the sake of rendering it intelligible, I have translated out of its rude orthography, give minute particulars of his fate. It was written immediately at the period, for it mentions the earl of Athole as not yet in custody. It was first published by the indefatigable Mr. Ritson, but with so many contractions and peculiarities of character, as to render it illegible, excepting by antiquaries.

This was before saint Bartholomew's mass,
That Frizel was y-taken, were it more other less,
To sir Thomas of Multon, gentil baron and free,
And to sir John Jose be-take tho was he
To hand,
He was y-fettered wele
Both with iron and steel
To bringen to Scotland.

Soon after the tiding to the king come,
He sent him to London, with mony armed groom,
He came in at Newgate, I tell you it on a-plight,
A garland of leaves on his head y-dight
Of green,
For he should be y-know
Both of high and of low,
For the traitour I ween.

Y-fettered were his legs under his horses wombe,
Both with iron and with steel mancled were his hond,
A garland of pervink* set up his heved,†
Much was the power that him was bereved,
In land.
So God me amend,
Little he ween'd
So to be brought in hand.

This was upon our lady's even, forsooth I understand,
The justices sate for the knights of Scotland,
Sir Thomas of Multon, an kinde knyght and wise,
And sir Ralph of Sandwich that mickle is hold in price,
And sir John Abel,
Moe I might tell by tale
Both of great and small
Ye know sooth well.

Then said the justice, that gentil is and free,
Sir Simond Frizel the king's traiter hast thou be;
In water and in land that mony mighten see,
What sayst thou thereto how will thou quite be,
Do say,
So foul he him wist,
Nede war on trust
For to say nay.

With fetters and with ginst y-hot he was to draw
From the tower of London that many men might know,
In a kirtle of Burel, a selcouth wise,
And a garland in his head of the new guise,
Through Cheape.
Many men of England
For to see Symond
Thitherward can leap.

Though he cam to the gallows first he was on hung,
All quick beheaded that him thought long;
Then he was y-opened, his bowels y-brend,§
The heved to London-bridge was send
To shende.
So evermore mote I the,
Some while weened he
Thus little to stand.‖

He rideth through the city, as I tell may,
With gamen and with solace that was their play,
To London-bridge he took the way,
Mony was the wives child that thereon lacketh-a-day,¶
And said, alas!
That he was y-born
And so vilely forlorn
So fair man he was.**

Now standeth the heved above the tu-brigge,
Fast by Wallace sooth for to segge;
After succour of Scotland long may he pry,
And after help of France what halt it to lie,
I ween,
Better him were in Scotland,
With his axe in his hand,
To play on the green, &c.

The preceding stanzas contain probably as minute an account as can be found, of the trial and execution of state criminals of the period. Superstition mingled its horrors with those of a ferocious state policy, as appears from the following singular narrative.

"The Friday next, before the assumption of our lady, king Edward met Robert the Bruce at saint Johnstoune, in Scotland, and with his company, of which company king Edward quelde seven thousand. When Robert the Bruce saw this mischief, and gan to flee, and hov'd him that men might not him find; but S. Simond Frisell pursued was so sore, so that he turned again and abode bataille, for he was a worthy knight and a bolde of bodye, and the Englishmen pursuede him sore on every side and quelde the steed that sir Simond Frisell rode upon, and then toke him and led him to the host. And S. Symond began for to flatter and speke fair, and saide, lordys, I shall give you four thousand markes of silver, and myne horse and harness, and all my armoure and incorne. Tho' answered Thobaude of Pevenes, that was the kinges archer, Now, God me so helpe, it is for nought that thou speakest, for all the gold of England I would not let thee go without commandment of king Edward. And tho' he was led to the king, and the king would not see him, but commanded to lead him away to his doom in London, on our lady's even nativity. And he was hung and drawn, and his head smitten off, and hanged again with chains of iron upon the gallows, and his head was set at London-bridge upon a spear, and against Christmas the body was burnt, for encheson *(reason)* that the men that keeped the body saw many devils ramping with iron crooks, running upon the gallows, and horribly tormenting the body. And many that them saw, anon thereafter died for dread, or waxen mad, or sore sickness they had."—*MS. Chronicle in the British Museum quoted by Ritson.*

14. Was not the life of Athole shed,
To sooth the tyrant's sickened bed?—P. 259.

John de Strathbogie, earl of Athole, had attempted to escape out of the kingdom, but a storm cast him upon the coast, when he was taken, sent to London, and executed, with circumstances of great barbarity, being first half strangled, then let down from the gallows while yet alive, barbarously dismembered, and his body burned. It may surprise the reader to learn, that this was a *mitigated* punishment; for, in respect that his mother was a grand-daughter of king John, by his natural son Richard, he was not drawn on a sledge to execution, "that point was forgiven," and he made the passage on horseback. Matthew of Westminster tells us that king Edward, then extremely ill, received great ease from the news that his relative was apprehended. "*Quo audito, Rex Angliæ, etsi gravissimo morbo tunc languerit, levius tamen tulit dolorem.*" To this singular expression the text alludes.

15. And must his word, at dying day,
Be nought but quarter, hang, and slay!—P. 259.

This alludes to a passage in Barbour, singularly expressive of the vindictive spirit of Edward I. The prisoners taken at the castle of Kildrummie had surrendered upon condition that they should be at king Edward's disposal. "But his will," says Barbour, "was always evil towards Scottishmen." The news of the surrender of Kildrummie arrived when he was in his mortal sickness at Burgh-upon-Sands.

"And when he to the death was near,
The folk that at Kyldromy wer

* Periwinckle. † Head.
‡ He was condemned to be drawn. § Burned.
‖ Meaning at one time he little thought to stand thus.
¶ Saith lack-a-day.
** The gallant knight, like others in the same situation, was pitied by the female spectators, as "a proper young man."

Come with prisoners that they had tane,
And syne to the king are gane.
And for to comfort him they tauld
How they the castell to them yauld;
And how they till his will were brought,
To do off that whatever he thought,
And ask'd what men should off them do.
Then look'd he angryly them to.
He said, grinning, '*Hangs and draws.*'
That was wonder of sic saws,
That he, that to the death was near,
Should answer u| on sic manner;
Forouten moaning and mercy.
How might he trust on him to cry,
That sooth-tastly dooms all things
To have mercy for his crying,
Off him that through his felony,
Into sic point had no mercy?"

There was much truth in the Leonine couplet, with which Matthew of Westminster concludes his encomium on the first Edward:

"Scotos Edwardus, dum vixit, suppeditavit,
Tenuit, afflixit, depressit, dilaniavit."—

16. By Woden wild, (my grandsire's oath.)—P. 259.

The Mac-Leods, and most other distinguished Hebridean families, were of Scandinavian extraction, and some were late or imperfect converts to Christianity. The family names of Torquil, Thormod, &c. are all Norwegian.

17. While I the blessed cross advance,
And expiate this unhappy chance,
In Palestine, with sword and lance.—P. 260.

Bruce uniformly professed, and probably felt, compunction for having violated the sanctuary of the church by the slaughter of Comyn; and finally, in his last hours, in testimony of his faith, penitence, and zeal, he requested James lord Douglas to carry his heart to Jerusalem, to be there deposited in the Holy Sepulchre.

18. De Bruce! I rose with purpose dread
To speak my curse upon thy head.—P. 260.

So soon as the notice of Comyn's slaughter reached Rome, Bruce and his adherents were excommunicated. It was published first by the archbishop of York, and renewed at different times, particularly by Lambyrton, bishop of St. Andrew's, in 1308; but it does not appear to have answered the purpose which the English monarch expected. Indeed, for reasons which it may be difficult to trace, the thunders of Rome descended upon the Scottish mountains with less effect than in more fertile countries. Probably the comparative poverty of the benefices occasioned that fewer foreign clergy settled in Scotland; and the interest of the native churchmen was linked with that of their country. Many of the Scottish prelates, Lambyrton the primate particularly, declared for Bruce, while he was yet under the ban of the church, although he afterwards again changed sides.

19. I feel within mine aged breast
A power that will not be repressed.—P. 260.

Bruce, like other heroes, observed omens, and one is recorded by tradition. After he had retreated to one of the miserable places of shelter, in which he could venture to take some repose after his disasters, he lay stretched upon a handful of straw, and abandoned himself to his melancholy meditations. He had now been defeated four times, and was upon the point of resolving to abandon all hopes of further opposition to his fate, and to go to the Holy Land. It chanced his eye, while he was thus pondering, was attracted by the exertions of a spider, who, in order to fix his web, endeavoured to swing himself from one beam to another above his head. Involuntarily he became interested in the pertinacity with which the insect renewed his exertions, after failing six times; and it occurred to him that he would decide his own course according to the success or failure of the spider. At the seventh effort the insect gained his object; and Bruce, in like manner, persevered and carried his own. Hence it has been held unlucky or ungrateful, or both, in one of the name of Bruce to kill a spider.

The arch-deacon of Aberdeen, instead of the abbot of this tale, introduces an Irish pythoness, who not only predicted his good fortune as he left the island of Rachrin, but sent her two sons along with him, to ensure her own family a share in it.

"Then in short time men might them see
Shoot all their galleys to the sea,
And bear to sea both oar and steer,
And other things that mistir* were.
And as the king upon the sand
Was ganging up and down, bidand†
Till that his men ready were,
His host come right till him there,
And when that she him halsed had,
And privy speech till him she made;
And said, 'Take good keep till my saw,
For of ye pass I will ye show,
Off your fortoun a great party.
But our all specially
A wittering here I shall you ma,
What end that your purposs shall ta.
For in this land is none trewly
Wots things to come so well as I.
Ye pass now furth on your voyage,
To avenge the harme, and the outrage,
That Inglissmen has to you done;
But you wot not what kind fortune
Ye mon drey in your warring.
But wyt he well, without lying,
That from ye now have taken land,
None so mighty, no so strenthle of hand,
Shall make you pass out of your country
Till all to you abandoned be.
Within short time ye shall be king,
And have the land to your likeing,
And overcome your fos all.
But many anoyis thole ye shall,
Or that your purpose end have tane;
But ye shall them outdrive ilkane.
And, that ye trow this sekyrly,
My two sons with you shall I
Send to take part of your labour;
For I wote well they shall not fail
To be rewarded well at right,
When ye are heyit to your might.'"
Barbour's Bruce, Book iv, p. 120, edited by J. Pinkerton, London, 1790.

20. A hunted wanderer on the wild.—P. 260.

This is not metaphorical. The echoes of Scotland did actually

——— ring
With the bloodhounds that bayed for her fugitive king.

A very curious and romantic tale is told by Barbour upon this subject, which may be abridged as follows:

When Bruce had again got footing in Scotland in the spring of 1306, he continued to be in a very weak and precarious condition, gaining, indeed, occasional advantages, but obliged to fly before his enemies whenever they assembled in force. Upon one occasion, while he was lying with a small party in the wilds of Cumnock, in Ayrshire, Aymer de Valence, earl of Pembroke, with his inveterate foe John of Lorn, came against him suddenly with eight hundred highlanders, besides a large body of men at arms. They brought with them a slough-dog, or bloodhound, which, some say, had been

* Need. † Abiding.

once a favourite with the Bruce himself, and therefore was least likely to lose the trace.

Bruce, whose force was under four hundred men, continued to make head against the cavalry, till the men of Lorn had nearly cut off his retreat. Perceiving the danger of his situation, he acted as the celebrated and ill-requited Mina is said to have done in similar circumstances. He divided his force into three parts, appointed a place of rendezvous, and commanded them to retreat by different routes. But when John of Lorn arrived at the spot where they divided, he caused the hound to be put upon the trace, which immediately directed him to the pursuit of that party which Bruce headed. This, therefore, Lorn pursued with his whole force, paying no attention to the others. The king again subdivided his small body in three parts, and with the same result, for the pursuers attached themselves exclusively to that which he led in person. He then caused his followers to disperse, and retained only his foster-brother in his company. The slough-dog followed the trace, and, neglecting the others, attached himself and his attendants to pursuit of the king. Lorn became convinced that his enemy was nearly in his power, and detached five of his most active attendants to follow him, and interrupt his flight. They did so with all the agility of mountaineers. "What aid wilt thou make?" said Bruce to his single attendant, when he saw the five men gain ground on him. "The best I can," replied his foster-brother. "Then," said Bruce, "here I make my stand." The five pursuers came up fast. The king took three to himself, leaving the other two to his foster-brother. He slew the first who encountered him; but observing his foster-brother hard pressed, he sprung to his assistance and despatched one of his assailants. Leaving him to deal with the survivor, he returned upon the other two, both of whom he slew before his foster-brother had despatched his single antagonist. When this hard encounter was over, with a courtesy, which in the whole work marks Bruce's character, he thanked his foster-brother for his aid. "It likes you to say so," answered his follower; "but you yourself slew four of the five." "True," said the king, "but only because I had better opportunity than you. They were not apprehensive of me when they saw me encounter three, so I had a moment's time to spring to thy aid, and to return equally unexpectedly upon my own opponents."

In the meanwhile Lorn's party approached rapidly, and the king and his foster-brother betook themselves to a neighbouring wood. Here they sat down, for Bruce was exhausted by fatigue, until the cry of the slough-hound came so near, that his foster-brother entreated Bruce to provide for his safety by retreating farther. "I have heard," answered the king, "that whosoever will wade a bow-shot length down a running stream, shall make the slough-hound lose scent.—Let us try the experiment; for were yon devilish hound silenced, I should care little for the rest."

Lorn in the meanwhile advanced, and found the bodies of his slain vassals, over whom he made his moan, and threatened the most deadly vengeance. Then he followed the hound to the side of the brook down which the king had waded a great way. Here the hound was at fault, and John of Lorn, after long attempting in vain to recover Bruce's trace, relinquished the pursuit.

"Others," says Barbour, "affirm, that upon this occasion the king's life was saved by an excellent archer who accompanied him, and who, perceiving they would be finally taken by means of the bloodhound, hid himself in a thicket, and shot him with an arrow. In which way," adds the metrical biographer, "this escape happened I am uncertain, but at that brook the king escaped from his pursuers."

> "When the chasers rallied were,
> And John of Lorn had met them there,
> He told sir Aymer all the case,
> How that the king escaped was,
> And how that he his five men slew,
> And syne to the wood him drew.
> When sir Aymer heard this, in haste,
> He sained him for the wonder:
> And said, 'He is greatly to prise,
> For I know none that living is,
> That at mischief can help him so;
> I trow he should be hard to slay,
> And he were bodyn* evenly.'
> On this wise spake sir Aymery."
>
> *Barbour's Bruce*, p. 188.

The English historians agree with Barbour as to the mode in which the English pursued Bruce and his followers, and the dexterity with which he evaded them. The following is the testimony of Harding, a great enemy to the Scottish nation:

> "The king Edward with host hym sought full sore,
> But aye he fled into woodes and strayte forest,
> And slew his men at stayles and dangers those,
> And at marreys and mires was aye full prest,
> Englishmen to kyll without any rest;
> In the mountaynes and cragges he slew ay where,
> And in the nyght his foes he frayed full sore:
>
> "The king Edward with hornes and houndes him sought,
> With men on fote, through marris, mosse, and myre,
> Through wodes also, and mountains (wher thei fought,)
> And euer the kyng Edward hight men great hyre,
> Hym for to take and by myght conquere;
> But thei myght him not gette by force ne by train,
> He satte by the fyre when thei were in the rain."
>
> Harding's *Chronicle*, p. 303, 4.

Peter Langtoft has also a passage concerning the extremities to which king Robert was reduced, which he entitles

> *De Roberto Brus et fuga circum circa fit.*
> And well I understood that the king Robyn
> Has drunken of that blood the drink of Dan Waryn.
> Dan Waryn he les towns that he held,
> With he made a res, and misberying of scheld.
> Sithen into the forest he ged naked and wode,
> Als a wild beast, eat of the grass that stood.
> Thus Dan Waryn in his book men read,
> God give the king Robyn, that all his kind so speed.
> Sir Robynet the Brus he durst none abide,
> That they made him restus, bath in moor and wood-side,
> To while he made his train, and did unwhile outrage.
>
> *Peter Langtoft's Chronicle*, vol. ii, p. 336, octavo, London, 1810.

NOTES TO CANTO III.

1. For, glad of each pretext for spoil,
A pirate sworn was Cormac Doil.—P. 261.

A sort of persons common in the isles, as may be easily believed, until the introduction of civil polity. Witness the dean of the Isles' account of Ronay. "At the north end of Raarsay, be half myle of sae frae it, layes ane ile callit Ronay, mair then a myle in lengthe, full of wood and heddir, with ane havin for heiland galleys in the middis of it, and the same havein is guid for fostering of thieves, rugguairs, and revairs, till a nail, upon the peilling and spulzeing of poor pepil. This isle per-

* Matched.

teins to M'Gillychallan of Raarsay by force, and to the bishope of the iles be heretage."—Sir Donald Monro's *Description of the Western Islands of Scotland*, Edinburgh, 1805, p. 22.

2. "Alas! dear youth, the unhappy time,"
Answered the Bruce, "must bear the crime,
Since, guiltier far than you,
E'en I—" he paused; for Falkirk's woes
Upon his conscious soul arose.—P. 261.

I have followed the vulgar and inaccurate tradition, that Bruce fought against Wallace, and the array of Scotland, at the fatal battle of Falkirk. The story, which seems to have no better authority than that of Blind Harry, bears, that having made much slaughter during the engagement, he sat down to dine with the conquerors without washing the filthy witness from his hands.

"Fasting he was, and had been in great need,
Bloodied were all his weapons and his weed;
Southern lords scorned him in terms rude,
And said, Behold yon Scot eats his own blood.

'Then rued he sore, for reason had he known,
That blood and land alike should be his own;
With them he long was, ere he got away,
But contrair Scots, he fought not from that day."

The account given by most of our historians, of the conversation between Bruce and Wallace over the Carron river, is equally apocryphal.

There is full evidence that Bruce was not at that time on the English side, nor present at the battle of Falkirk; nay, that he acted as a guardian of Scotland, along with John Comyn, in the name of Baliol, and in opposition to the English. He was the grandson of the competitor, with whom he has been sometimes confounded. Lord Hailes has well described, and in some degree apologized for, the earlier part of his life.

"His grandfather, the competitor, had patiently acquiesced in the award of Edward. His father, yielding to the times, had served under the English banners. But young Bruce had more ambition and a more restless spirit. In his earlier years he acted upon no regular plan. By turns the partizan of Edward, and the vicegerent of Baliol, he seems to have forgotten or stifled his pretensions to the crown. But his character developed itself by degrees, and in maturer age became firm and consistent."—*Annals of Scotland*, p. 290, quarto, London, 1776.

3. These are the savage wilds that lie
North of Strathnardill and Dunskye.—P. 262.

The extraordinary piece of scenery which I have here attempted to describe is, I think, unparalleled in any part of Scotland, at least in any which I have happened to visit. It lies just upon the frontier of the laird of Mac-Leod's country, which is thereabouts divided from the estate of Mr. Mac-Allister of Strathaird, called Strathnardill by the dean of the Isles. The following account of it is extracted from a journal kept during a tour through the Scottish islands:—

"The western coast of Syke is highly romantic, and at the same time displays a richness of vegetation in the lower grounds to which we have hitherto been strangers. We passed three salt-water lochs, or deep embayments, called Loch Bracadale, Loch Einort, and Loch ——, and about 11 o'clock opened Loch Slavig. We were now under the western termination of the high ridge of mountains called Cuillen, or Quillin, or Coolin, whose weather-beaten and serrated peaks we had admired at a distance from Dunvegan. They sunk here upon the sea, but with the same bold and peremptory aspect which their distant appearance indicated. They appeared to consist of precipitous sheets of naked rock, down which the torrents were leaping in a hundred lines of foam. The tops of the ridge, apparently inaccessible to human foot, were rent and split into the most tremendous pinnacles. Towards the base of these bare and precipitous crags, the ground, enriched by the soil washed down from them, is comparatively verdant and productive. Where we passed within the small isle of Soa, we entered Loch Slavig, under the shoulder of one of these grisly mountains, and observed that the opposite side of the loch was of a milder character, the mountains being softened down into steep green declivities. From the bottom of the bay advanced a head-land of high rocks, which divided its depth into two recesses, from each of which a brook issued. Here it had been intimated to us we would find some romantic scenery; but we were uncertain up which inlet we should proceed in search of it. We chose, against our better judgment, the southerly dip of the bay, where we saw a house which might afford us information. We found, upon inquiry, that there is a lake adjoining to each branch of the bay; and walked a couple of miles to see that near the farm-house, merely because the honest highlander seemed jealous of the honour of his own loch, though we were speedily convinced it was not that which we were recommended to examine. It had no particular merit excepting from its neighbourhood to a very high cliff, or precipitous mountain, otherwise the sheet of water had nothing differing from any ordinary low-country lake. We returned and re-embarked in our boat, for our guide shook his head at our proposal to climb over the peninsula, or rocky head-land which divided the two lakes. In rowing round the head-land we were surprised at the infinite number of sea-fowl, then busy apparently with a shoal of fish.

"Arrived at the depth of the bay, we found that the discharge from this second lake forms a sort of water-fall, or rather a rapid stream, which rushes down to the sea with great fury and precipitation. Round this place were assembled hundreds of trouts and salmon, struggling to get up into the fresh water: with a net we might have had twenty salmon at a haul; and a sailor, with no better hook than a crooked pin, caught a dish of trouts during our absence. Advancing up this huddling and riotous brook, we found ourselves in a most extraordinary scene; we lost sight of the sea almost immediately after we had climbed over a low ridge of crags, and were surrounded by mountains of naked rock, of the boldest and most precipitous character. The ground on which we walked was the margin of a lake, which seems to have sustained the constant ravage of torrents from these rude neighbours. The shores consisted of huge strata of naked granite, here and there intermixed with bogs, and heaps of gravel and sand piled in the empty water-courses. Vegetation there was little or none; and the mountains rose so perpendicularly from the water edge, that Borrodale, or even Glencoe, is a jest to them. We proceeded a mile and a half up this deep, dark, and solitary lake, which was about two miles long, half a mile broad, and is, as we learned, of extreme depth. The murky vapours which enveloped the mountain ridges obliged us by assuming a thousand varied shapes, changing their drapery into all sort

of forms, and sometimes clearing off all together. It is true, the mist made us pay the penalty by some heavy and downright showers, from the frequency of which, a highland boy, whom we brought from the farm, told us the lake was popularly called the Water-kettle. The proper name is Loch Corriskin, from the deep corrie, or hollow, in the mountains of Cuillen, which affords the basin for this wonderful sheet of water. It is as exquisite a savage scene as Loch Katrine is a scene of romantic beauty. After having penetrated so far as distinctly to observe the termination of the lake, under an immense precipice, which arises abruptly from the water, we returned, and often stopped to admire the ravages which storms must have made in these recesses, where all human witnesses were driven to places of more shelter and security. Stones, or rather large masses and fragments of rocks, of a composite kind, perfectly different from the strata of the lake, were scattered upon the bare rocky beach, in the strangest and most precarious situations, as if abandoned by the torrents which had borne them down from above. Some lay loose and tottering upon the ledges of the natural rock, with so little security, that the slightest push moved them, though their weight might exceed many tons. These detached rocks, or stones, were chiefly what is called plum-pudding stones. The bare rocks, which formed the shore of the lakes, were a species of granite. The opposite side of the lake seemed quite pathless and inaccessible, as a huge mountain, one of the detached ridges of the Cuillen Hills, sinks in a profound and perpendicular precipice down to the water. On the left-hand side, which we traversed, rose a higher and equally inaccessible mountain, the top of which strongly resembled the shivered crater of an exhausted volcano. I never saw a spot in which there was less appearance of vegetation of any kind. The eye rested on nothing but barren and naked crags, and the rocks, on which we walked by the side of the loch, were as bare as the pavements of Cheap-side. There are one or two small islets in the loch, which seem to bear juniper or some such low bushy shrub. Upon the whole, though I have seen many scenes of more extensive desolation, I never witnessed any in which it pressed more deeply upon the eye and the heart than at Loch Corriskin; at the same time that its grandeur elevated and redeemed it from the wild and dreary character of utter barrenness."

4. Men were they all of evil mien,
Down-looked, unwilling to be seen.—P. 263.

The story of Bruce's meeting the banditti is copied with such alterations as the fictitious narrative rendered necessary, from a striking incident in the monarch's history, told by Barbour, and which I will give in the words of the hero's biographer, only modernizing the orthography. It is the sequel to the adventure of the blood-hound, narrated in Note 20, upon Canto II. It will be remembered that the narrative broke off, leaving the Bruce escaped from his pursuers, but worn out with fatigue, and having no other attendant but his foster-brother.

"And the good king held forth his way,
Betwixt him and his man, while they
Passed out through the forest were;
Syne in the moor they entered there.
It was both high, and long, and broad:
And or they half it passed had,
They saw on side three men coming,
Like to light men, and wavering.
Swords they had, and axes also;
And one of them, upon his hals*
A mekill bounden weather bore.
They meet the king, and halsed† him there.
And the king them their haulsing yauld;‡
And asked whether they would?
They said, Robert the Bruce they sought;
For meet with him giff that they might,
Their duelling with him would they ma'.§
The king said, 'Giff that ye will see,
Hold furth your way with me,
And I shall make you soon him se.'—
They perceived, by his speaking,
That he was the self-same Robert king,
And changed countenance, and late;‖
And held nought in the first state.
For they were foes to the king,
And thought to come into skulking;
And dwell with him, while that they saw
Their point, and bring him thereof daw.¶
They granted till his speech forthy,**
But the king, that was witty,
Perceived well, by their having,
That they loved him nothing.
And said, 'Fellows, you must all three,
Further acquaint till that we be,
All be your selven furth go.
And on the same wish we two
Shall follow behind, well near.'—
Quoth they, 'Sir, it is no mister††
To trow in us any ill.'—
'None do I,' said he; 'but I will
That ye go forth thus, while we
Better with other knowen be.'—
'We grant,' they said, 'since ye will so,'—
And forth upon their gate gan go.
Thus went they till the night was near,
And then the foremost coming were
Till a waste husband-house;‡‡ and there
They slew the wether that they bear,
And struck fire to roast their meat;
And asked the king if he would eat,
And rest him till the meat was dight.
The king, that hungry was, I hight,
Assented to their speech in hy,
But he said he would anerly§§
At a fire, and they all three
On no wise with them together be.
In the end of the house they should ma'
Another fire; and they did sua.
They drew them in the house end,
And half the wether till them send,
And they roasted in haste their meat,
And fell right freshly for to eat,
For the king well long fasted had;
And had right much travel made;
Therefore he eat full egrely.
And when he had eaten hastily,
He had to sleep so mekil will,
That he might set no let theretill.
For when the wames‖‖ filled are,
Men worthys¶¶ heavy evermore;
And to sleep draws heavyness.
The king, that all for-travelled*** was;
Saw that him worthyt sleep need was;
Till his fostyr-brother he says,
'May I trust in thee, me to awake,
Till I a little sleeping take?'—
'Ya, sir,' he said, 'till I may dree.'†††—
The king then winked a little way,
And sleeped not full entirely;
But glanced up oft suddenly,
For he had dread of these three men,
That at the other fire were then.
That they his foes were he wyst:
Therefore he sleeped, as fowll on twist.‡‡‡
The king sleeped but a little than,
When sic sleep fell on his man,
That he might not hold up his eye,
But fell in sleep and routed high.

* Neck. † Saluted. ‡ Returned their salute
§ Make. ‖ Gesture or manner.
¶ Kill him. ** Therefore. †† There is no need.
‡‡ Husbandman's house, cottage. §§ Alone.
‖‖ Bellies. ¶¶ Becomes. *** Fatigued.
††† Endure. ‡‡‡ Bird on bough.

Now is the king in great perille
For sleep he so a little while,
He shall be dead, forouten dreid,
For the three traitors took good heed,
That he on sleep was, and his man:
In full great haste they raise up than,
And drew their swords hastily;
And went towards the king in hy,
When that they saw him sleep sua,
And sleeping thought they would him slay.
The king upblinked hastily,
And saw his man sleeping him by,
And saw coming the t' other three.
Quickly on foot got he;
And drew his sword out, and them met:
And as he went, his foot he set
Upon his man well heavily.
He wakened and rose dizzily,
For the sleep mastered him so,
That or he got up ane of tho
That came for to slay the king,
Gave him a stroke in his rising,
So that he might help him no more.
The king so straitly stad* was there,
That he was never yet so stad.
Nor were the arming† that he had,
He had been dead, forouten mair.
But not forthy‡ on such manner
He helped him, in that bargain,§
That the three traitors he has slain,
Through God's grace, and his manhood.
His fostyr-brother there was dead.
Then was he wondre will off wayne
When he saw him left alone.
His fostyr-brother lamented he,
And waryet¶ all the t' other three.
And syne his way took him alone,
And right towards his tryst** is gone.'
The Bruce, Book vii, line 105.

5. And mermaid's alabaster grot,
Who bathes her limbs in sunless well
Deep in Strahaird's enchanted cell.—P. 265.

Imagination can hardly conceive any thing more beautiful than the extraordinary grotto discovered not many years since upon the estate of Alexander Mac-Allister, esq. of Strathaird. It has since been much and deservedly celebrated, and a full account of its beauties has been published by Dr. Mac-Leay of Oban. The general impression may perhaps be gathered from the following extract from a journal already quoted, which, written under the feelings of the moment, is likely to be more accurate than any attempt to recollect the impressions then received.

"The first entrance to this celebrated cave is rude and unpromising; but the light of the torches, with which we were provided, was soon reflected from the roof, floor, and walls, which seem as if they were sheeted with marble, partly smooth, partly rough with frost-work and rustic ornaments, and partly seeming to be wrought into statuary. The floor forms a steep and difficult ascent, and might be fancifully compared to a sheet of water, which, while it rushed whitening and foaming down a declivity, had been suddenly arrested and consolidated by the spell of an enchanter. Upon attaining the summit of this ascent, the cave opens into a splendid gallery, adorned with the most dazzling crystallizations, and finally descends with rapidity to the brink of a pool, of the most limpid water, about four or five yards broad. There opens beyond this pool a portal arch, formed by two columns of white spar, with beautiful chasing upon the sides, which promises a continuation of the cave. One of our sailors swam across, for there is no other mode of passing, and informed us (as indeed we partly saw by the light he carried) that the enchantment of Mac-Allister's cave terminates with this portal, a little beyond which there was only a rude cavern, speedily choked with stones and earth. But the pool, on the brink of which we stood, surrounded by the most fanciful mouldings, in a substance resembling white marble, and distinguished by the depth and purity of its waters, might have been the bathing grotto of a naiad. The groups of combined figures projecting, or embossed, by which the pool is surrounded, are exquisitely elegant and fanciful. A statuary might catch beautiful hints from the singular and romantic disposition of these stalactites. There is scarce a form, or group, on which active fancy may not trace figures or grotesque ornaments, which have been gradually moulded in this cavern by the dropping of the calcareous water hardening into petrifactions. Many of those fine groups have been injured by the senseless rage of appropriation of recent tourists; and the grotto has lost (I am informed,) through the smoke of torches, something of that vivid silver tint which was originally one of its chief distinctions. But enough of beauty remains to compensate for all that may be lost."—Mr. Mac-Allister of Strathaird has, with great propriety, built up the exterior entrance to this cave, in order that strangers may enter properly attended by a guide, to prevent any repetition of the wanton and selfish injury which this singular scene has already sustained.

* So securely situated.
† Had it not been for the armour he wore.
‡ Nevertheless.
§ Fray or dispute.
¶ Much afflicted.
** Cursed.
** The place of rendezvous appointed for his soldiers.

NOTES TO CANTO IV.

1. "Yet to no sense of selfish wrongs,
Bear witness with me, heaven, belongs
My joy o'er Edward's bier."—P. 266.

The generosity which does justice to the character of an enemy, often marks Bruce's sentiments, as recorded by the faithful Barbour. He seldom mentions a fallen enemy without praising such good qualities as he might possess. I will only take one instance. Shortly after Bruce landed in Carrick, in 1306, sir Ingram Bell, the English governor of Ayr, engaged a wealthy yeoman, who had hitherto been a follower of Bruce, to undertake the task of assassinating him. The king learned this treachery, as he is said to have done other secrets of the enemy, by means of a female with whom he had an intrigue. Shortly after he was possessed of this information, Bruce, resorting to a small thicket at a distance from his men, with only a single page to attend him, met the traitor, accompanied by two of his sons. They approached him with their wonted familiarity, but Bruce, taking his page's bow and arrow, commanded them to keep at a distance. As they still pressed forward with professions of zeal for his person and service, he, after a second warning, shot the father with the arrow; and being assaulted successively by the two sons, despatched first one, who was armed with an axe, then as the other charged him with a spear, avoided the thrust, struck the head from the spear, and cleft the skull of the assassin with a blow of his two-handed sword.

"He rushed down of blood all red,
And when the king saw they were dead,
All three lying, he wiped his brand.
With that his boy came fast running,
And said, 'Our lord might lowyt* be,
That granteth you might and poweste†

* Lauded. † Power.

To fell the felony and the pride,
Of three in so little tide.'—
The king said, 'So our lord me see,
They had been worthy men all three,
Had they not been full of treason:
But that made their confusion.' "
Barbour's Bruce, Book v, p. 153.

2. "Such hate was his on Solway's strand,
When vengeance clenched his palsied hand,
That pointed yet to Scotland's land".—P. 266.

To establish his dominion in Scotland had been a favourite object of Edward's ambition, and nothing could exceed the pertinacity with which he pursued it, unless his inveterate resentment against the insurgents, who so frequently broke the English yoke when he deemed it most firmly revited. After the battles of Falkirk and Methven, and the dreadful examples which he had made of Wallace and other champions of national independence, he probably concluded every chance of insurrection was completely annihilated. This was in 1306, when Bruce, as we have seen, was utterly expelled from Scotland: yet, in the conclusion of the same year, Bruce was again in arms and formidable; and in 1307, Edward, though exhausted by a long and wasting malady, put himself at the head of the army destined to destroy him utterly. This was, perhaps, partly in consequence of a vow which he had taken upon him, with all the pomp of chivalry, upon the day in which he dubbed his son a knight, for which see a subsequent note. But even his spirit of vengeance was unable to restore his exhausted strength. He reached Burgh-upon-Sands, a petty village of Cumberland, on the shores of the Solway Firth, and there, 6th July, 1307, expired, in sight of the detested and devoted country of Scotland. His dying injunctions to his son required him to continue the Scottish war, and never to recal Gaveston. Edward II disobeyed both charges. Yet more to mark his animosity, the dying monarch ordered his bones to be carrried with the invading army. Froissart, who probably had the authority of eye-witnesses, has given us the following account of this remarkable charge:

"In the said forest, the old king Robert of Scotland dyd kepe hymselfe, whan kyng Edward the Fyrst conquered nygh all Scotland; for he was so often chased, that none durst loge him in castell, nor fortresse, for feare of the sayd kyng.

"And ever whan the king was returned into Ingland, than he would gather together agayn his people, and conquere townes, castells, and fortresses, iuste to Berwick, some by battle and some by fair speech and love: and when the said king Edward heard thereof, than would he assemble his power, and wyn the realme of Scotland again; thus the chance went between these two forsaid kings. It was shewed me, how that this king Robert wan and lost his realme v times. So this continued till the said king Edward died at Berwick: and when he saw that he should die, he called before him his eldest son, who was king after him, and there, before all the barones, he caused him to swear, that as soon as he were dead, that he should take his body, and boyle it in a cauldron, till the flesh departed clean from the bones, and then to bury the flesh, and keep still the bones; and that as often as the Scotts should rebell against him, he should assemble the people against them, and cary with him the bones of his father; for he believed verily, that if they had his bones with them, that the Scotts should never attain any victory against them. The which thing was not accomplished, for when the king died, his son carried him to London."—BERNERS' FROISSART'S *Chronicle*, London, 1812, pp. 39, 40.

Edward's commands were not obeyed, for he was interred in Westminster Abbey, with the appropriate inscription:—"EDWARDUS PRIMUS, SCOTORUM MALLEUS, HIC EST. PACTUM SERVA." Yet some steps seem to have been taken towards rendering his body capable of occasional transportation, for it was exquisitely embalmed, as was ascertained when his tomb was opened some years ago. Edward II judged wisely in not carrying the dead body of his father into Scotland, since he would not obey his living counsels.

It ought to be observed, that though the order of the incidents is reversed in the poem, yet, in point of historical accuracy, Bruce had landed in Scotland, and obtained some successes of consequence, before the death of Edward I.

3. ———Canna's tower, that, steep and gray,
Like falcon-nest o'erhangs the bay.—P. 267.

The little island of Canna, or Cannay, adjoins to those of Rum and Muick, with which it forms one parish. In a pretty bay opening towards the east, there is a lofty and slender rock detached from the shore. Upon the summit are the ruins of a very small tower, scarcely accessible by a steep and precipitous path. Here it is said one of the kings, or lords of the Isles, confined a beautiful lady, of whom he was jealous. The ruins are of course haunted by her restless spirit, and many romantic stories are told by the aged people of the island concerning her fate in life, and her appearances after death.

4. And Ronin's mountains dark have sent
Their hunters to the shore.—P. 267.

Ronin (popularly called Rum, a name which a poet may be pardoned for avoiding if possible) is a very rough and mountainous island, adjacent to those of Eigg and Cannay. There is almost no arable ground upon it, so that, except in the plenty of the deer, which of course are now nearly extirpated, it still deserves the description bestowed by the archdean of the Isles.

"Ronin, sixteen myle north-wast from the ile of Coll, lyes ane ile callit Ronin Ile, of sixteen myle long, and six in bredthe in the narrowest, ane forest of heigh mountains, and abundance of little deire in it, quhilk deir will never be slane dounewith, but the principal saittis man be in the height of the hill, because the deir will be callit upwart ay be the tainchell, or without tynchel they will pass upwart perforce. In this ile will be gotten about Britane als many wild nests upon the plane mure as men pleasis to gadder, and yet by resson the fowls hes few to start them except deir. This ile lyes from the west to the eist in lenth, and pertains to M'Kenabrey of Colla. Many Solan geese are in this isle."—*Monro's Description of the Western Isles*, p. 18.

5. On Scoor-Eigg next a warning light
Summoned her warriors to the fight;
A numerous race, ere stern Macleod
O'er their bleak shores in vengeance strode.—P. 267.

These, and the following lines of the stanza, refer to a dreadful tale of feudal vengeance, of which unfortunately there are relics that still attest the truth. Scoor-Eigg is a high peak in the centre of the small isle of Eigg, or Egg. It is well known to mineralogists, as affording many interesting specimens, and to others whom chance or curios-

ity may lead to the island, for the astonishing view of the mainland and neighbouring isles, which it commands. I will again avail myself of the journal I have quoted.

"*26th August*, 1814.—At seven this morning we were in the sound which divides the Isle of Rum from that of Egg. The latter, although hilly and rocky, and traversed by a remarkably high and barren ridge, called Scoor-Eigg, has, in point of soil, a much more promising appearance. Southward of both lies the Isle of Muich, or Muck, a low and fertile island, and though the least, yet probably the most valuable of the three. We manned the boat, and rowed along the shore of Egg in quest of a cavern, which had been the memorable scene of a horrid feudal vengeance. We had rounded more than half the island, admiring the entrance of many a bold natural cave, which its rocks exhibited, without finding that which we sought, until we procured a guide. Nor, indeed, was it surprising that it should have escaped the search of strangers, as there are no outward indications more than might distinguish the entrance of a fox-earth. This noted cave has a very narrow opening, through which one can hardly creep on his knees and hands. It rises steep and lofty within, and runs into the bowels of the rock to the depth of 255 measured feet; the height at the entrance may be about three feet, but rises within to eighteen or twenty, and the breadth may vary in the same proportion. The rude and stony bottom of this cave is strewed with the bones of men, women, and children, the sad reliques of the ancient inhabitants of the island, two hundred in number, who were slain on the following occasion; The Mac-Donalds of the Isle of Egg, a people dependant on Clan-Ronald, had done some injury to the laird of Mac-Leod. The tradition of the isle says, that it was by a personal attack on the chieftain, in which his back was broken. But that of the other isles bears, more probably, that the injury was offered to two or three of the Mac-Leods, who, landing upon Egg, and using some freedom with the young women, were seized by the islanders, and bound hand and foot, and turned adrift in a boat, which the winds and waves safely conducted to Skye. To avenge the offence given, Mac-Leod sailed with such a body of men, as rendered resistance hopeless. The natives, fearing his vengeance, concealed themselves in this cavern, and, after a strict search, the Mac-Leods went on board their galleys after doing what mischief they could, concluding the inhabitants had left the isle, and betaken themselves to the Long Island, or some of Clan-Ronald's other possessions. But next morning they espied from the vessels a man upon the island, and immediately landing again, they traced his retreat by the marks of his footsteps, a light snow being unhappily on the ground. Mac-Leod then surrounded the cavern, summoned the subterranean garrison, and demanded that the individuals who had offended him should be delivered up to him. This was peremptorily refused. The chieftain then caused his people to divert the course of a rill of water, which, falling over the entrance of the cave, would have prevented his purposed vengeance. He then kindled at the entrance of the cavern a huge fire, composed of turf and fern, and maintained it with unrelenting assiduity, until all within were destroyed by suffocation. The date of this dreadful deed must have been recent, if one may judge from the fresh appearance of those reliques. I brought off, in spite of the prejudice of our sailors, a skull from among the numerous specimens of mortality which the cavern afforded. Before re-embarking we visited another cave, opening to the sea, but of a character entirely different, being a large open vault as high as that of a cathedral, and running back a great way into the rock at the same height. The height and width of the opening gives ample light to the whole. Here, after 1745, when the catholic priests were scarcely tolerated, the priest of Eigg used to perform the Roman catholic service, most of the islanders being of that persuasion. A huge ledge of rocks, rising about half way up one side of the vault, served for altar and pulpit; and the appearance of a priest and highland congregation in such an extraordinary place of worship, might have engaged the pencil of Salvator."

6. ——the group of islets gay
That guard famed Staffa round.—P. 267.

It would be unpardonable to detain the reader upon a wonder so often described, and yet so incapable of being understood by description. This palace of Neptune is even grander upon a second than the first view—the stupendous columns which form the sides of the cave, the depth and strength of the tide which rolls its deep and heavy swell up to the extremity of the vault—the variety of tints formed by white, crimson, and yellow stalactites, or petrifactions, which occupy the vacancies between the base of the broken pillars that form the roof, and intersect them with a rich, curious, and variegated chasing, occupying each interstice—the corresponding variety below water, where the ocean rolls over a dark-red or violet-coloured rock, from which, as from a base, the basaltic columns arise—the tremendous noise of the swelling tide, mingling with the deep-toned echoes of the vault,—are circumstances elsewhere unparalleled.

Nothing can be more interesting than the varied appearance of the little archipelago of islets, of which Staffa is the most remarkable. This group, called in Gaelic, Tresharnish, affords a thousand varied views to the voyager, as they appear in different positions with reference to his course. The variety of their shape contributes much to the beauty of these effects.

7. Scenes sung by him who sings no more!—P. 268.

The ballad, entitled "Macphail of Colonsay, and the Mermaid of Corrievrekin," was composed by John Leyden, from a tradition which he found while making a tour through the Hebrides about 1801, soon before his fatal departure for India, where, after having made farther progress in oriental literature than any man of letters who had embraced these studies, he died a martyr to his zeal for knowledge, in the island of Java, immediately after the landing of our forces near Batavia, in September, 1811.

8. Up Tarbat's western lake they bore,
Then dragged their bark the isthmus o'er.—P. 268.

The peninsula of Cantire is joined to South Knapdale by a very narrow isthmus, formed by the western and eastern loch of Tarbat. These two salt-water lakes, or bays, encroach so far upon the land, and the extremities come so near to each other, that there is not above a mile of land to divide them.

"It is not long," says Pennant, "since vessels of nine or ten tons were drawn by horses out of

the west loch into that of the east, to avoid the dangers of the Mull of Cantyre, so dreaded and so little known was the navigation round that promontory. It is the opinion of many, that these little isthmuses, so frequently styled Tarbat in North Britain, took their name from the above circumstance; Tarruing, signifying to draw, and Bata, a boat. This too might be called, by way of pre-eminence, the Tarbat, from a very singular circumstance related by Torfæus. When Magnus, the bare-footed king of Norway, obtained from Donald-Bane of Scotland the cession of the western isles, or all those places that could be surrounded in a boat, he added to them the peninsula of Cantyre by this fraud: he placed himself in the stern of a boat, held the rudder, was drawn over this narrow track, and by this species of navigation wrested the country from his brother monarch."

PENNANT'S *Scotland*, London, 1790, p. 190.

But that Bruce also made this passage, although at a period two or three years later than in the poem, appears from the evidence of Barbour, who mentions also the effect produced upon the minds of the highlanders, from the prophecies current amongst them:—

"But to king Robert will we gang,
That we have left unspoken of laug.
When he had convoyed to the sea
His brother Edward, and his menyie,
And other men of great noblay,
To Tarbat they held their way,
In galleys ordained for their fare,
But them worth* draw their ships there,
And a mile was betwixt the seas,
And that was lompynt† all with trees.
The king his ships there gert‡ draw;
And for the wind couth§ stoutly blaw
Upon their back, as they would ga,
He gert men rops and masts ta,
And set them in the ships high,
And sails to the tops tye:
And gert men gang thereby drawing.
The wind them helped that was blowing,
So that, in little space,
Their fleet all over drawn was.

And when they that in the isles were,
Heard tell how the king had there,
Gart‖ his ships with sails go
Out over betwixt Tarbat two,
They were abaysit¶ so utterly,
For they wist, through old prophecy,
That he that should gar** ships so
Betwixt the seas with sails go,
Should win the isles so till hand,
That none with strength should him withstand.
Therefore they come all to the king.
Was none withstood his bidding,
Owtakyn†† Johne of Lorne alane.
But well soon after was he ta'n;
And present right to the king.
And they there were of his leading,
That till the king had broken fay,‡‡
Were all dead and destroyed away."

Barbour's Bruce, vol. iii, Book xv, pp. 14, 15.

9. The sun, ere yet he sunk behind
Ben-ghoil, "the Mountain of the Wind,"
Gave his grim peaks a greeting kind,
And bade Loch-Ranza smile.—P. 268.

Loch-Ranza is a beautiful bay, on the northern extremity of Arran, opening towards East Tarbat Loch. It is well described by Pennant.

"The approach was magnificent: a fine bay in front, about a mile deep, having a ruined castle near the lower end, on a low far-projecting neck of land, that forms another harbour, with a narrow passage; but within has three fathom of water, even at the lowest ebb. Beyond is a little plain, watered by a stream, and inhabited by the people of a small village. The whole is environed with a theatre of mountains; and in the back-ground the serrated crags of Grianan-Athol soar above."
—PENNANT'S *Tour to the Western Isles*, pp. 191, 2.

Ben-Ghaoil, "the mountain of the winds," is generally known by its English, and less poetical name, of Goatfield.

10. Each to Loch-Ranza's margin spring:
That blast was winded by the king.—P. 269.

The passage in Barbour, describing the landing of Bruce, and his being recognized by Douglas and those of his followers, who had preceded him, by the sound of his horn, is in the original singularly simple and affecting.—The king arrived in Arran with thirty-three small row-boats. He interrogated a female if there had arrived any warlike men of late in that country. "Surely, sir," she replied, "I can tell you of many who lately came hither, discomfited the English governor, and blockaded his castle of Brodick. They maintain themselves in a wood at no great distance." The king truly conceiving that this must be Douglas and his followers, who had lately set forth to try their fortune in Arran, desired the woman to conduct him to the wood. She obeyed.

"The king then blew his horn on high;
And gert his men that were him by,
Hold them still, and all privy;
And syne again his horn blew he.
James of Dowglas heard him blow,
And at the last alone gan know,
And said, 'Soothly yon is the king;
I know long while since his blowing.'
The third time therewithall he blew,
And then sir Robert Boid it knew;
And said, 'Yon is the king, but dread,
Go we forth till him, better speed.'
Then went they till the king in hye,
And him inclined courteously,
And blithly welcomed them the king,
And was joyful of their meeting,
And kissed them; and speared* syne
How they had fared in hunting?
And they him told all, but lesing:†
Syne laud they God of their meeting.
Syne with the king till his harbourye
Went both joyful and jolly."

Barbour's Bruce, Book v, pp. 115, 16.

11. ———his brother blamed,
But shared the weakness, while, ashamed,
With haughty laugh his head he turned,
And dashed away the tear he scorned.—P. 269.

The kind, and yet fiery character of Edward Bruce, is well painted by Barbour, in the account of his behaviour after the battle of Bannockburn. Sir Walter Ross, one of the very few Scottish nobles who fell in that battle, was so dearly beloved by Edward, that he wished the victory had been lost, so Ross had lived.

Out-taken him, men has not seen
Where he for any men made moaning.

And here the venerable archdeacon intimates a piece of scandal. Sir Edward Bruce, it seems, loved Ross's sister, *par amours*, to the neglect of his own lady, sister to David de Strathbogie, earl of Athole. This criminal passion had evil consequences; for, in resentment of the affront done to his sister, Athole attacked the guard which Bruce had left at Cambus-Kenneth, during the battle of Bannockburn, to protect his magazine of provisions, and slew sir William Keith, the commander. For which treason he was forfeited.

* Were obliged to. † Supposed entangled. ‡ Caused. § Could. ‖ Caused. ¶ Confounded. ** Make. †† Escaped. ‡‡ Faith.

* Asked. † Without lying.

In like manner, when, in a sally from Carrickfergus, Neil Fleming, and the guards whom he commanded, had fallen, after a protracted resistance, which saved the rest of Edward Bruce's army, he made such moan as surprised his followers:

> "Sic moan he made men had ferly,*
> For he was not customably
> Wont for to moan men any thing,
> Nor would not hear men make moaning."

Such are the nice traits of character so often lost in general history.

12. "Thou heard'st a wretched female plain
In agony of travail-pain,
And thou didst bid thy little band
Upon the instant turn and stand."—P. 271.

This incident, which illustrates so happily the chivalrous generosity of Bruce's character, is one of the many simple and natural traits recorded by Barbour. It occurred during the expedition which Bruce made to Ireland, to support the pretensions of his brother Edward to the throne of that kingdom. Bruce was about to retreat, and his host was arrayed for moving.

> "The king has heard a woman ery,
> He asked, what that was in hy,†
> 'It is the layndar,‡ sir,' sai ane,
> 'That her child-ill◊ right now has ta'en:
> And must now leave behind us here.
> Therefore she makes an evil cheer.'‖
> The king said, 'Certes,¶ it were a pity
> That she in that point left should be,
> For certes I trow there is no man
> That he no will rue** a woman than.'
> His hoste all ther arrested he,
> And gert a tent soon stintit†† be,
> And gert her gang, in hastily,
> And other women to be her by,
> While she was delivered he bade;
> And syne forth on his ways rade.
> And how she forth should carried be,
> Or be furth fure,‡‡ ordained he.
> This was a full great courtesy,
> That swilk a king and so mighty,
> Gert his men dwell on this maner,
> But for a poor lavender."
>
> *Barbour's Bruce*, Book xvi, pp. 39, 40.

NOTES TO CANTO V.

1. O'er chasms he passed, where fractures wide
Craved wary eye and ample stride.—P. 272.

The interior of the island of Arran abounds with beautiful highland scenery. The hills, being very rocky and precipitous, afford some cataracts of great height, though of inconsiderable breadth. There is one pass over the river Machrai, renowned for the dilemma of a poor woman, who, being tempted by the narrowness of the ravine to step across, succeeded in making the first movement, but took fright when it became necessary to move the other foot, and remained in a posture equally ludicrous and dangerous, until some chance passenger assisted her to extricate herself. It is said she remained there some hours.

2. He crossed his brow beside the stone,
Where druids erst heard victims groan,
And at the cairns upon the wild,
O'er many a heathen hero piled.—P. 272.

The isle of Arran, like those of Man and Anglesea, abounds with many relics of heathen, and probably druidical superstition. There are high erect columns of unhewn stone, the most early of all monuments, the circles of rude stones, commonly entitled druidical, and the cairns, or sepulchral piles, within which are usually found urns inclosing ashes. Much doubt necessarily rests upon the history of such monuments, nor is it possible to consider them as exclusively Celtic, or druidical. By much the finest circles of standing stones, excepting Stonehenge, are those of Stenhouse, at Stennis, in the island of Pomona, the principal isle of the Orcades. These, of course, are neither Celtic nor druidical; and we are assured that many circles of the kind occur both in Sweden and Norway.

3. Old Brodiek's Gothic towers were seen.
From Hastings, late their English lord,
Douglas had won them by the sword.—P. 272.

Brodick or Brathwick castle, in the isle of Arran, is an ancient fortress, near an open roadstead called Brodick-bay, and not distant far from a tolerable harbour, closed in by the island of Lamlash. This important place had been assailed a short time before Bruce's arrival in the island. James lord Douglas, who accompanied Bruce to his retreat in Rachrin, seems, in the spring of 1306, to have tired of his abode there, and set out accordingly, in the phrase of the times, to see what adventure God would send him. Sir Robert Boyd accompanied him; and his knowledge of the localities of Arran appears to have directed his course thither. They landed in the island privately, and appear to have laid an ambush for St. John Hastings, the English governor of Brodick, and surprised a considerable supply of arms and provisions, and nearly took the castle itself. Indeed, that they actually did so, has been generally averred by historians, although it does not appear from the narrative of Barbour. On the contrary, it would seem that they took shelter within a fortification of the ancient inhabitants, a rampart called *Tor an Schian*. When they were joined by Bruce, it seems probable that they had gained Brodick castle. At least tradition says, that from the battlements of the tower he saw the supposed signal fire on Turnberry-nook.

The castle is now much modernized, but has a dignified appearance, being surrounded by flourishing plantations.

4. Oft, too, with unaccustomed ears,
A language much unmeet he hears.—P. 273.

Barbour, with great simplicity, gives an anecdote, from which it would seem that the vice of profane swearing, afterwards too general among the Scottish nation, was, at this time, confined to military men. As Douglas, after Bruce's return to Scotland, was roving about the mountainous country of Tweed-dale, near the water of Line, he chanced to hear some persons in a farm-house say "*the devil.*" Concluding, from this hardy expression, that the house contained warlike guests, he immediately assailed it, and had the good fortune to make prisoners Thomas Randolph, afterward the famous earl of Moray, and Alexander Stewart, lord Bonkill. Both were then in the English interest, and had come into that country with the purpose of driving out Douglas. They afterwards ranked among Bruce's most zealous adherents.

5. For, see! the ruddy signal made,
That Clifford, with his merry-men all,
Guards carelessly our father's hall.—P. 273.

The remarkable circumstances by which Bruce was induced to enter Scotland, under the false idea that a signal-fire was lighted upon the shore near his maternal castle of Turnberry—the disap-

---

* Wonder. † Haste. ‡ Laundress.
◊ Child-bed. ‖ Stop. ¶ Certainly.
** Pity. †† Pitched. ‡‡ Moved.

pointment which he met with, and the train of success which arose out of that very disappointment, are too curious to be passed over unnoticed. The following is the narrative of Barbour. The introduction is a favourable specimen of his style, which seems to be in some degree the model for that of Gawain Douglas;—

" This was in ver,* when winter tide,
With his blasts hideous to bide,
Was overdriven: and birds small,
As turtle and the nightingale,
Begouth† right sariolly‡ to sing;
And for to make in their signing
Sweet notes and sounds ser,§
And melodies pleasant to hear.
And trees began to ma‖
Burgeans,¶ and bright blooms alsua,
To win the helying** of their head,
That wicked winter had them revid,††
And all grasses began to spring.
Into that time the noble king,
With his fleet, and a few mengye,‡‡
Three hundred I trow they might be,
Is to the sea, out of Arane,
A little forouth§§ even gone.
They rowed fast, with all their might,
Till that upon them fell the night,
That wax myrk‖‖ upon great maner,
So that they wist not where they were.
For they no needle had, na stone;
But rowed always intill one,
Steering all time upon the fire,
That they saw burning light and schyr.¶¶
It was but auentur*** them led:
And they in short time so them sped,
That at the fire arrived they,
And went to land but more delay.
And Cuthbert, that has seen the fire,
Was full of anger, and of ire;
For he durst not do it away;
And was also doubting aye
That his lord should pass to sea,
Therefore their coming waited he:
And met them at their arriving.
He was well soon brought to the king,
That speared at him how he had done.
And he with sore heart told him soon,
How that he found none well loving,
But all were foes that he found;
And that the lord the Persy,
With near three hundred in company,
Was in the castle there beside,
Fulfilled of dispite and pride.
But more than two parts of his rout
Were harboured in the town without;
'And despite you more, sir king,
Than men may despite ony thing.'—
Than said the king, in full great ire,
'Traitor, why made you the fire?'—
'Ah! sir,' said he, 'so God me see!
The fire was never made by me.
No, or the night, I wist it not;
But fra I wist it, well I thought
That ye and wholly your menzie
In hy††† should put you to the sea.
Forth I come to meet you here,
To tell perils that may appear.'—
The king was of his speech angry,
And asked his priye men, in hy,
What at them thought was best to do.
Sir Edward first answered thereto,
His brother that was so hardy,
And said; 'I say you sekyrly
There shall no peril, that may be,
Drive me eftsoons‡‡‡ to the sea.
Mine adventure here take will I,
Whether it be easeful or angry.'
'Brother,' he said, 'since you will sua,
It is good that we same ta,
Disease or ease, or pain or play,
After as God will us purvay.§§§

And since men say that the Persy
Mine heretage will occupy;
And his menyie so near us lies,
That us despites many ways;
Go we, and venge* some of the dispite.
And that may we have done as tite;†
For they lie traistly,‡ but dreading
Of us, or of our here coming.
And though we sleeping slew them all,
Reproof thereof no man shall.
For warrior no force should ma,
Whether he might ourcome his fa
Through strength, or through subtility;
But that good faith ay holden be.'"

6. Now ask you whence that wond'rous light,
Whose fairy glow beguiled their sight?—
It ne'er was known————P. 274.

The following are the words of an ingenious correspondent, to whom I am obliged for much information respecting Turnberry and its neighbourhood. " The only tradition now remembered of the landing of Robert the Bruce in Carrick, relates to the fire seen by him from the isle of Arran. It is still generally reported, and religiously believed by many, that this fire was really the work of supernatural power, unassisted by the hand of any mortal being; and it is said, that, for several centuries the flame rose yearly on the same hour of the same night of the year, on which the king first saw it from the turrets of Brodick castle; and some go so far as to say, that, if the exact time were known, it would be still seen. That this superstitious notion is very ancient, is evident from the place where the fire is said to have appeared, being called the Bogle's Brae, beyond the remembrance of man. In support of this curious belief, it is said that the practice of burning heath for the improvement of land was then unknown; that a spunkie (Jack o'Lanthorn) could not have been seen across the breadth of the Forth of Clyde, between Ayrshire and Arran; and that the courier of Bruce was his kinsman, and never suspected of treachery."—Letter from Mr. Joseph Train of Newton Stuart, author of an ingenious Collection of Poems, illustrative of many ancient traditions in Galloway and Ayrshire, Edinburgh, 1814.

7. They gained the chase, a wide domain
Left for the castle's sylvan reign.—P. 275.

The castle of Turnberry, on the coast of Ayrshire, was the property of Robert Bruce, in right of his mother. Lord Hailes mentions the following remarkable circumstance concerning the mode in which he became proprietor of it:—" Martha, countess of Carrick, in her own right, the wife of Robert Bruce, lord of Annandale, bare him a son, afterwards Robert I. (11th July, 1274.) The circumstances of her marriage were singular: Happening to meet Robert Bruce in her domains, she became enamoured of him, and with some violence led him to her castle of Turnberry. A few days after she married him, without the knowledge of the relations of either party, and without the requisite consent of the king. The king instantly seized her castle and whole estates. She afterwards atoned by a fine for her feudal delinquency. Little did Alexander foresee, that, from this union, the restorer of the Scottish monarchy was to arise."—*Annals of Scotland*, vol. ii, p. 180.

The same obliging correspondent, whom I have quoted in the preceding note, gives me the following account of the present state of the ruins of Turnberry:—"Turnberry Point is a rock projecting

* Spring.
§ Several.
** Covering.
§§ Before.
*** Adventure.
§§§ Prepare.
† Began.
‖ More.
†† Bereaved
‖‖ Dark.
††† Haste.
‡ Loftily.
¶ Buds.
‡‡ Many.
¶¶ Clear.
‡‡‡ Soon after.

* Avenge.
† Snatched.
‡ Trustily.

into the sea; the top of it is about 18 feet above high water mark. Upon this rock was built the castle. There is about 25 feet high of the wall next to the sea yet standing. Upon the land-side the wall is only about four feet high; the length has been 60 feet, and the breadth 45: it was surrounded by a ditch, but that is now nearly filled up. The top of the ruin, rising between 40 and 50 feet above the water, has a majestic appearance from the sea. There is not much local tradition in the vicinity connected with Bruce or his history. In front, however, of the rock, upon which stands Culzean castle, is the mouth of a romantic cavern, called the Cove of Colean, in which, it is said, Bruce and his followers concealed themselves immediately after landing, till they arranged matters for their farther enterprizes. Burns mentions it in the poem of Halloween. The only place to the south of Turnberry worth mentioning, with reference to Bruce's history, is the Weary Nuik, a little romantic green hill, where he and his party are said to have rested, after assaulting the castle."

Around the castle of Turnberry was a level plain of about two miles in extent, forming the castle park. There could be nothing, I am informed, more beautiful than the copse-wood and verdure of this extensive meadow, before it was invaded by the plough-share.

8. The Bruce hath won his fathers' hall!—P. 277.

I have followed the flattering and pleasing tradition, that the Bruce, after his descent upon the coast of Ayrshire, actually gained possession of his maternal castle. But the tradition is not accurate. The fact is, that he was only strong enough to alarm and drive in the out-posts of the English garrison, then commanded, not by Clifford, as assumed in the text, but by Percy. Neither was Clifford slain upon this occasion, though he had several skirmishes with Bruce. He fell afterwards in the battle of Bannockburn. Bruce, after alarming the castle of Turnberry, and surprising some part of the garrison, who were quartered without the walls of the fortress, retreated into the mountainous part of Carrick, and there made himself so strong that the English were obliged to evacuate Turnberry, and at length the castle of Ayr. Many of his benefactions and royal gifts attest his attachment to the hereditary followers of his house, in this part of the country.

It is generally known that Bruce, in consequence of his distresses after the battle of Methven, was affected by a scorbutic disorder, which was then called a leprosy. It is said he experienced benefit from the use of a medical spring about a mile north of the town of Ayr, called from that circumstance King's Ease. The following is the tradition of the country, collected by Mr. Train:—"After Robert ascended the throne, he founded the priory of dominican monks, every one of whom was under the obligation of putting up to heaven a prayer once every week-day, and twice in holydays, for the recovery of the king; and, after his death, these masses were continued for the saving of his soul. The ruins of this old monastery are now nearly level with the ground. Robert likewise caused houses to be built round the well of King's Ease, for eight lepers, and allowed eight bolls of oatmeal, and 28*l.* Scotch money, per annum, to each person. These donations were laid upon the lands of Fullarton, and are now payable by the duke of Portland. The farm of Sheils, in the neighbourhood of Ayr, has to give, if required, a certain quantity of straw for the lepers' beds, and so much to thatch their houses annually. Each leprous person had a drinking-horn provided him by the king, which continued to be hereditary in the house to which it was first granted. One of those identical horns, of very curious workmanship, was in the possession of the late colonel Fullarton of that ilk."

My correspondent proceeds to mention some curious remnants of antiquity respecting this foundation. "In compliment to sir William Wallace, the great deliverer of his country, king Robert Bruce invested the descendants of that hero with the right of placing all the lepers upon the establishment of King's Ease. This patronage continued in the family of Craigie, till it was sold, along with the lands of the late sir Thomas Wallace. The burgh of Ayr then purchased the right of applying the donations of King's Ease to the support of the poor-house of Ayr. The lepers' charter-stone was a basaltic block, exactly the shape of a sheep's kidney, and weighing an Ayrshire boll of meal. The surface of this stone being as smooth as glass, there was not any other way of lifting it than by turning the hollow to the ground, there extending the arms along each side of the stone, and clasping the hands in the cavity. Young lads were always considered as deserving to be ranked among men, when they could lift the blue-stone of King's Ease. It always lay beside the well, till a few years ago, when some English dragoons encamped at that place wantonly broke it, since which the fragments have been kept by the freemen of Prestwick in a place of security. There is one of these charter-stones at the village of Old Daily, in Carrick, which has become more celebrated by the following event, which happened only a very few years ago:—The village of New Daily being now larger than the old place of the same name, the inhabitants insisted that the charter-stone should be removed from the old town to the new, but the people of Old Daily were unwilling to part with their ancient right. Demands and remonstrances were made on each side without effect, till at last man, woman, and child, of both villages, marched out, and by one desperate engagement put an end to a war, the commencement of which no person then living remembered. Justice and victory, in this instance, being of the same party, the villagers of the old town of Daily now enjoy the pleasure of keeping the *blue-stane* unmolested. Ideal privileges are often attached to some of these stones. In Girvan, if a man can set his back against one of the above description, he is supposed not liable to be arrested for debt, nor can cattle, it is imagined, be pounded, so long as they are fastened to the same stone. That stones were often used as symbols to denote the right of possessing land, before the use of written documents became general in Scotland, is, I think, exceedingly probable. The charter-stone of Inverness is still kept with great care, set in a frame, and hooped with iron, at the market-place of that town. It is called by the inhabitants of that district Clack na Couddin. I think it is very likely that Carey has mentioned this stone in his poem of Craig Phaderick. This is only a conjecture, as I have never seen that work. While the famous marble chair was allowed to remain at Scoon, it was considered as the charter-stone of the kingdom of Scotland."

9. "Bring here," he said, "the mazers four,
My noble fathers loved of yore."—P. 277.

These mazers were large drinking cups, or goblets. Mention of them occurs in a curious inventory of the treasure and jewels of James III, which will be published, with other curious documents of antiquity, by my friend, Mr. Thomas Thomson, D. Register of Scotland, under the title of "A Collection of Inventories, and other Records of the Royal Wardrobe, Jewel-House," &c. I copy the passage in which mention is made of the mazers, and also of an habiliment, called "king Robert Bruce's serk," i. e. *shirt*, meaning, perhaps, his shirt of mail; although no other arms are mentioned in the inventory. It might have been a relic of more sanctified description, a penance shirt perhaps.

Extract from "Inventare of ane Parte of the gold and silver conyeit and unconyeit, Jowellis, and uther Stuff perteining to Umquhile our Soverane Lords Fader, that he had in Depois the Tyme of his Deceis, and that come to the Handis of our Soverane Lord that now is. M.CCCC. LXXXVIII."

Memorandum fundin in a bandit kist like a gardeviant,* in the fyrst the grete chenye† of gold, contenand sevin score sex linkis.

Item, thre platis of silver.
Item, tuelf salfatis.‡
Item, fyftene discheis§ ouregilt.
Item, a grete gilt plate.
Item, twa grete bassingis‖ ouregilt.
Item, four Masaris, called king Robert the Brocis, with a cover.
Item, a grete cok maid of silver.
Item, the hede of silver of ane of the coveris of masar.
Item, a fare dialle.¶
Item, twa kasis of knyffis.**
Item, a pair of auld kniffis.
Item, takin be the smyth that opinnit the lokkis, in gold fourty demyis.
Item, in Inglys grotis††———xxiiii li. and the said silver given again to the takaris of hym.
Item, ressavit in the cloissat of Davidis tour, ane haly waterfat of silver, twa boxis, a cageat tume, a glas with rois-water, a dosoune of torchis, *King Robert Brucis Serk.*

The real use of the antiquarian's studies is, to bring the minute information which he collects to bear upon points of history. For example, in the inventory I have just quoted, there is given the contents of the *black kist*, or chest, belonging to James III, which was his strong-box, and contained a quantity of treasure in money and jewels, surpassing what might have been at the period expected of "poor Scotland's gear." This illustrates and authenticates a striking passage in the history of the House of Douglas, by Hume of Godscroft. The last earl of Douglas (of the elder branch) had been reduced to monastic seclusion in the abbey of Lindores, by James II. James III, in his distress, would willingly have recalled him to public life, and made him his lieutenant. "But he," says Godscroft, "laden with years and old age, and weary of troubles, refused, saying, Sir, you have keept mee, and your *black coffer* in Stirling, too long; neither of us can doe you any good: I, because my friends have forsaken me, and my followers and dependers are fallen from me, betaking themselves to other masters; and your black trunk is too farre from you, and your enemies are between you and it; or (as others say) because there was in it a sort of black coyne, that the king had caused to be coyned by the advice of his courtiers; which moneys, (saith he,) sir, if you had put out at the first, the people would have taken it; and if you had employed mee in due time I might have done you service. But now there is none that will take notice of me, nor meddle with your money." —HUME'S *History of the House of Douglas*, fol. Edinb. 1644, p. 206.

10. Arouse old friends, and gather new.—P. 277.

As soon as it was known in Kyle, says ancient tradition, that Robert Bruce had landed in Carrick, with the intention of recovering the crown of Scotland, the laird of Craigie, and forty-eight men in his immediate neighbourhood, declared in favour of their legitimate prince. Bruce granted them a tract of land, still retained by the freemen of Newton to this day. The original charter was lost when the pestilence was raging at Ayr; but it was renewed by one of the Jameses, and is dated at Faulkland. The freemen of Newton were formerly officers by rotation. The provost of Ayr, at one time, was a freeman of Newton, and it happened to be his turn, while provost in Ayr, to be officer in Newton, both of which offices he discharged at the same time.

11. Let Ettrick's archers sharp their darts,
The fairest forms, the truest hearts!—P. 277.

The forest of Selkirk, or Ettrick, at this period, occupied all the district which retains that denomination, and embraced the neighbouring dales of Tweeddale, and at least the Upper Ward of Clydesdale. All that tract was probably as waste as it is mountainous, and covered with the remains of the ancient Caledonian forest, which is supposed to have stretched from Cheviot Hills as far as Hamilton, and to have comprehended even a part of Ayrshire. At the fatal battle of Falkirk, sir John Stewart, of Bonkill, brother to the steward of Scotland, commanded the archers of Selkirk forest, who fell around the dead body of their leader. The English historians have commemorated the tall and stately persons, as well as the unswerving faith, of these foresters. Nor has their interesting fall escaped the notice of an elegant modern poetess, whose subject led her to treat of that calamitous engagement:—

The glance of the morn had sparkled bright
On their plumage green and their actons light;
The bugle was strung at each hunter's side,
As they had been bound to the chase to ride;
But the bugle is mute, and the shafts are spent,
The arm unnerved, and the bow unbent,
And the tired forester is laid
Far, far from the clustering green-wood shade!
Sore have they toil'd—they are fallen asleep,
And their slumber is heavy, and dull, and deep!
When over their bones the grass shall wave,
When the wild winds o'er their tombs shall rave,
Memory shall lean on their graves, and tell
How Selkirk's hunters bold around old Stewart fell!
Miss *Holford's Wallace, or the Fight of Falkirk*, Lond. quarto, 1809, pp. 170, 1.

* Gard-vin, or wine cooler. † Chain.
‡ Salt-cellars, anciently the object of much curious workmanship. § Dishes. ‖ Basins. ¶ Dial.
** Cases of knives. †† English groats.

NOTES TO CANTO VI.

1. When Bruce's banner had victorious flowed
O'er Loudoun's mountain, and in Ury's vale.—P. 278.

The first important advantage gained by Bruce,

after landing at Turnberry, was over Aymer de Valance, earl of Pembroke, the same by whom he had been defeated near Methven. They met, as has been said, by appointment, at Loudoun-hill, in the west of Scotland. Pembroke sustained a defeat, and from that time Bruce was at the head of a considerable flying army. Yet he was subsequently obliged to retreat into Aberdeenshire, and was there assailed by Comyn, earl of Buchan, desirous to avenge the death of his relative, the Red Comyn, and supported by a body of English troops under Philip de Moubray. Bruce was ill at the time of a scrofulous disorder, but took horse to meet his enemies, although obliged to be supported on either side. He was victorious, and it is said that the agitation of his spirits restored his health.

2. When English blood oft deluged Douglas-dale.—P. 278.

The "good lord James of Douglas," during these commotions often took from the English his own castle of Douglas, but, being unable to garrison it, contented himself with destroying the fortifications, and retiring into the mountains. As a reward to his patriotism, it is said to have been prophesied, that how often soever Douglas Castle should be destroyed, it should always again arise more magnificent from its ruins. Upon one of these occasions, he used fearful cruelty, causing all the store of provisions, which the English had laid up in his castle, to be heaped together, bursting the wine and beer-casks among the wheat and flour, slaughtering the cattle upon the same spot, and upon the top of the whole, cutting the throats of the English prisoners. This pleasantry of the "good lord James" is commemorated under the name of the *Douglas's Larder*. A more pleasing tale of chivalry is recorded by Godscroft. "By this means, and such other exploits, he so affrighted the enemy, that it was counted a matter of great jeopardie to keep this castle, which began to be called the *adventurous* (or hazardous) *castle of Douglas;* whereupon sir John Walton being in suit of an English lady, she wrote to him, that when he had kept the adventurous castle of Douglas seven years, then he might think himself worthy to be a suitor to her. Upon this occasion, Walton took upon him the keeping of it, and succeeded to Thruswall, but he ran the same fortune with the rest that were before him. For sir James, having first dressed an ambuscado near unto the place, he made fourteen of his men take so many sacks, and fill them with grass, as though it had been corn, which they carried in the way to Lanark, the chief market town in that county: so hoping to draw forth the captain by that bait, and either to take him or the castle, or both. Neither was this expectation frustrated, for the captain did bite, and came forth to have taken this victual (as he supposed.) But ere he could reach these carriers, sir James, with his company, had gotten between the castle and him; and these disguised carriers, seeing the captain following after them, did quickly cast off their sacks, mounted themselves on horseback, and met the captain with a sharp encounter, being so much the more amazed, as it was unlooked for; wherefore, when he saw these carriers metamorphosed into warriors, and ready to assault him, fearing that which was, that there was some train laid for them, he turned about to have retired to his castle, but there he also met with his enemies; between which two companies he and his whole followers were slain, so that none escaped: the captain afterwards being searched, they found (as it is reported) his mistress's letter about him."—*Hume's History of the House of Douglas*, fol. pp. 29, 30.

3. And fiery Edward routed stout St. John.—P. 278.

"John de St. John, with 15,000 horsemen, had advanced to oppose the inroad of the Scots. By a forced march he endeavoured to surprise them, but intelligence of his motions was timeously received. The courage of Edward Bruce, approaching to temerity, frequently enabled him to achieve what men of more judicious valour would never have attempted. He ordered the infantry, and the meaner sort of his army, to entrench themselves in strong narrow ground. He himself, with fifty horsemen well harnessed, issued forth under cover of a thick mist, surprised the English on their march, attacked and dispersed them."—DALRYMPLE'S *Annals of Scotland*, quarto, Edinburgh, 1779, p. 25.

4. When Randolph's war-cry swelled the southern gale.—P. 278.

Thomas Randolph, Bruce's sister's son, a renowned Scottish chief, was in the early part of his life not more remarkable for consistency than Bruce himself. He espoused his uncle's party when Bruce first assumed the crown, and was made prisoner at the fatal battle of Methven, in which his relative's hopes appeared to be ruined. Randolph accordingly not only submitted to the English, but took an active part against Bruce, appeared in arms against him, and in the skirmish where he was so closely pursued by the bloodhound, it is said his nephew took his standard with his own hand. But Randolph was afterwards made prisoner by Douglas, in Tweeddale, (see p. 306,) and brought before king Robert. Some harsh language was exchanged between the uncle and nephew, and the latter was committed for a time to close custody. Afterwards, however, they were reconciled, and Randolph was created earl of Moray, about 1312. After this period he eminently distinguished himself, first by the surprise of Edinburgh castle, and afterwards by many similar enterprises, conducted with equal courage and ability.

5. ——Stirling's towers,
Beleaguered by king Robert's powers;
And they took term of truce.—P. 278.

When a long train of success, actively improved by Robert Bruce, had made him master of almost all Scotland, Stirling castle continued to hold out. The care of the blockade was committed by the king to his brother Edward, who concluded a treaty with sir Philip Mowbray, the governor, that he should surrender the fortress, if it were not succoured by the king of England before St. John the Baptist's day. The king severely blamed his brother for the impolicy of a treaty, which gave time to the king of England to advance to the relief of the castle with all his assembled forces, and obliged himself either to meet them in battle with an inferior force, or to retreat with dishonour. "Let all England come," answered the reckless Edward, "we will fight them were they more." The consequence was, of course, that each kingdom mustered its strength for the expected battle, and as the space agreed upon reached from Lent to Midsummer, full time was allowed for that purpose.

6. To summon prince and peer,
At Berwick-bounds to meet their liege.—P. 278.

There is printed in Rymer's *Fœdera* the summons issued upon this occasion to the sheriff of York; and he mentions eighteen other persons to whom similar ordinances were issued. It seems to respect the infantry alone, for it is entitled, *De peditibus ad recussum Castri de Stryvelin a Scotis obsessi properare faciendis.* This circumstance is also clear from the reasoning of the writ, which states, "We have understood that our Scottish enemies and rebels are endeavouring to collect as strong a force as possible of infantry, in strong and marshy grounds, where the approach of cavalry would be difficult, between us and the castle of Stirling."—It then sets forth Mowbray's agreement to surrender the castle, if not relieved before St. John the Baptist's day, and the king's determination, with divine grace, to raise the siege. "Therefore," the summons further bears, "to remove our said enemies and rebels from such places as above-mentioned, it is necessary for us to have a strong force of infantry fit for arms." And accordingly the sheriff of York is commanded to equip and send forth a body of four thousand infantry; to be assembled at Werk, upon the tenth day of June first, under pain of the royal displeasure, &c.

7. And Cambria, but of late subdued,
Sent forth her mountain-multitude.—P. 278.

Edward the first, with the usual policy of a conqueror, employed the Welch, whom he had subdued, to assist him in his Scottish wars, for which their habits, as mountaineers, particularly fitted them. But this policy was not without its risks. Previous to the battle of Falkirk, the Welch quarrelled with the English men-at-arms, and after bloodshed on both parts, separated themselves from his army, and the feud between them, at so dangerous and critical a juncture, was reconciled with difficulty. Edward II followed his father's example in this particular, and with no better success. They could not be brought to exert themselves in the cause of their conquerors. But they had an indifferent reward for their forbearance. Without arms, and clad only in scanty dresses of linen cloth, they appeared naked in the eyes even of the Scottish peasantry; and after the rout of Bannockburn, were massacred by them in great numbers, as they retired in confusion towards their own country. They were under command of sir Maurice de Berkley.

8. And Connaught poured from waste and wood
Her hundred tribes, whose sceptre rude
Dark Eth O'Connor swayed.—P. 278.

There is in the *Fœdera* an invitation to Eth O' Connor, chief of the Irish of Connaught, setting forth that the king was about to move against his Scottish rebels, and therefore requesting the attendance of all the force he could muster, either commanded by himself in person, or by some nobleman of his race. These auxiliaries were to be commanded by Richard de Burgh, earl of Ulster. Similar mandates were issued to the following Irish chiefs, whose names may astonish the unlearned, and amuse the antiquary.

"Eth O Donnuld, Duci Hibernicorum de Tyrconil;
Demond O Kahan, Duci Hibernicorum de Fernetrew;
Doneval O Neel, Duci Hibernicorum de Tryowyn;
Neel Macbreen, Duci Hibernicorum de Kynallelewan;
Eth Offyn, Duci Hibernicorum de Turtery;
Admely Mac Anegus, Duci Hibernicorum de Onehagh;
Neel O Hanlan, Duci Hibernicorum de Erthere;
Bien Mac Mahun, Duci Hibernicorum de Uriel;
Laueregh Mac Wyr, Duci Hibernicorum de Lougherin;
Gillys O Railly, Duci Hibernicorum de Bresfeny;
Geffrey O Fergy, Duci Hibernicorum de Montiragwil;
Felyn O Honughur, Duci Hibernicorum de Connach;
Donethuth O Brien, Duci Hibernicorum de Tothmund;
Dermod Mac Arthy, Duci Hibernicorum de Dessemound;
Denenoul Carbragh;
Maur. Kenenagh Mac Murgh;
Murghugh O Bryn;
David O Tothvill;
Dermod O Tonoghur, Doffaly;
Fyn O Dymsy;
Souethuth Mac Gillephatrick;
Leyssagh O Morth;
Gilbertus Ekelly, Duci Hibernicorum de Omany;
Mac Ethelau:
Omalan Heelyn, Duci Hibernicorum de Midie."
Rymer's Acta Publica, vol. iii, pp. 476, 477.

9. Their chief, Fitz-Louis.—P. 279.

Fitz-Louis, or Mac-Louis, otherwise called Fullarton, is a family of ancient descent in the isle of Arran. They are said to be of French origin, as the name intimates. They attached themselves to Bruce upon his first landing; and Fergus Mac-Louis, or Fullarton, received from the grateful monarch, a charter, dated 26th November, in the second year of his reign (1307,) for the lands of Kilmichel, and others, which still remain in this very ancient and respectable family.

10. In battles four beneath their eye,
The forces of king Robert lie.—P. 279.

The arrangements adopted by king Robert for the decisive battle of Bannockburn, are given very distinctly by Barbour, and form an edifying lesson to tacticians. Yet, till commented upon by lord Hailes, this important passage of history has been generally and strangely misunderstood by historians. I will here endeavour to detail it fully.

Two days before the battle, Bruce selected the field of action, and took post there with his army, consisting of about 30,000 disciplined men, and about half the number of disorderly attendants upon the camp. The ground was called the New Park of Stirling; it was partly open, and partly broken by copses of wood and marshy ground. He divided his regular forces into four divisions. Three of these occupied a front line, separated from each other, yet sufficiently near for the purposes of communication. The fourth division formed a reserve. The line extended in a north-easterly direction from the brook of Bannock, which is so rugged and broken as to cover the right flank effectually, to the village of saint Ninian's, probably in the line of the present road from Stirling to Kilsyth. Edward Bruce commanded the right wing, which was strengthened by a strong body of cavalry under Keith, the marshal of Scotland, to whom was committed the important charge of attacking the English archers; Douglas, and the

young Stewart of Scotland, led the central wing; and Thomas Randolph, earl of Moray, the left wing. The king himself commanded the fourth division, which lay in reserve behind the others. The royal standard was pitched, according to tradition, in a stone, having a round hole for its reception, and thence called the Bore-stone. It is still shown on the top of a small eminence, called Brock's-brae, to the south-west of St. Ninian's. His main body thus disposed, king Robert sent the followers of the camp, fifteen thousand and upwards in number, to the eminence in rear of his army, called from that circumstance the *Gillies'* (*i. e.* the servants') *hill*.

The military advantages of this position were obvious. The Scottish left flank, protected by the brook of Bannock, could not be turned; or, if that attempt were made, a movement by the reserve might have covered it. Again, the English could not pass the Scottish army, and move towards Stirling, without exposing their flank to be attacked while in march.

If, on the other hand, the Scottish line had been drawn up east and west, and facing to the southward, as affirmed by Buchanan, and adopted by Mr. Nimmo, the author of the History of Stirlingshire, there appears nothing to have prevented the English from approaching upon the carse, or level ground, from Falkirk, either from turning the Scottish left flank, or from passing their position, if they preferred it, without coming to an action, and moving on to the relief of Stirling. And the Gillies' hill, if this less probable hypothesis be adopted, would be situated, not in the rear, as allowed by all the historians, but upon the left flank of Bruce's army. The only objection to the hypothesis above laid down is, that the left flank of Bruce's army was thereby exposed to a sally from the garrison of Stirling. But *first*, the garrison were bound to neutrality by terms of Mowbray's treaty; and Barbour even seems to censure, as a breach of faith, some secret assistance which they rendered their countrymen upon the eve of battle, in placing temporary bridges of doors and spars over the pools of water in the carse, to enable them to advance to the charge.* 2dly, Had this not been the case, the strength of the garrison was probably not sufficient to excite apprehension. 3dly, The adverse hypothesis leaves the rear of the Scottish army as much exposed to the Stirling garrison, as the left flank would be in the case supposed.

It only remains to notice the nature of the ground in front of Bruce's line of battle. Being part of a park, or chase, it was considerably interrupted with trees, and an extensive marsh, still visible, in some places rendered it inaccessible, and in all of difficult approach. More to the northward, where the natural impediments were fewer, Bruce fortified his position against cavalry, by digging a number of pits so close together, says Barbour, as to resemble the cells in a honey-comb. They were a foot in breadth, and between two and three feet deep, many rows of them being placed one behind the other. They were slightly covered with brushwood and green sods, so as not to be obvious to an impetuous enemy.

All the Scottish army were on foot, excepting a select body of cavalry stationed with Edward Bruce on the right wing, under the immediate command of sir Robert Keith, the marshal of Scotland, who were destined for the important service of charging and dispersing the English archers.

Thus judiciously posted, in a situation fortified both by art and nature, Bruce awaited the attack of the English.

11. Beyond, the southern host appears.—P. 279.

Upon the 23d June, 1314, the alarm reached the Scottish army of the approach of the enemy. Douglas and the marshal were sent to reconnoitre with a body of cavalry.

> "And soon the great host have they seen,
> Where shields shining were so sheen,
> And bacinets burnished bright,
> That gave against the sun great light.
> They saw so fele* brawdyne† baners,
> Standards, pennons, and spears,
> And so fele knights upon steeds,
> All flaming in their weeds,
> And so fele batails,‡ and so broad,
> And too so great room as they rode,
> That the maist host, and the stoutest
> Of Christendom, and the greatest,
> Should be abaysit§ for to see
> Their foes unto such quantity."
>
> *Barbour's Bruce*, vol. ii, p. 111.

The two Scottish commanders were cautious in the account which they brought back to their camp. To the king in private they told the formidable state of the enemy; but in public reported that the English were indeed a numerous host, but ill commanded, and worse disciplined.

12. With these the valiant of the Isles
Beneath their chieftains ranked their files.—P. 279.

The men of Argyle, the Islanders, and the highlanders in general, were ranked in the rear. They must have been numerous, for Bruce had reconciled himself with almost all their chieftains, excepting the obnoxious Mac-Dougals of Lorn. The following deed, containing the submission of the potent earl of Ross to the king, was never before published. It is dated in the third year of Robert's reign, that is, 1309.

OBLIGACIO COMITIS ROSSENSIS PER HOMAGIUM FIDELITATEM ET SCRIPTUM.

Universis Christi fidelibus ad quorum noticiam presentes literæ peruenerint Willielmus Comes de Ross salutem in domino sempiternam. Quia magnificus princeps Dominus Robertus Dei gracia Rex Scottorum Dominus meus ex innata sibi bonitate, inspirataque clemencia, et gracia speciali remisit michi pure rancorem animi sui, et relaxauit ac condonauit michi omuimodas transgressiones seu offensas contra ipsum et suos per me et meos vsque ad confeccionem literarum presencium perpetratas: Et terras meas et tenementa mea omnia graciose concessit. Et me nichilominus de terra de Dingwal et Ferncroskry infra comitatum de Suthyrland de benigna liberalitate sua heriditarie infeodare curauit. Ego tantam principis beneuolenciam efficaciter attendens, et pro tot graciis michi factis, vicem sibi gratitudinis meis pro viribus de cetero digne————vite cupiens exhibere, subiicio et obligo me et heredes meos et homines meos vniuersus dicto Domino meo Regi per omnia ————erga suam regiam dignitatem, quod erimus de cetero fideles sibi et heredibus suis et fidele sibi seruicium auxilium et concilium————contra omnes homines et feminas qui vivere poterint aut mori, et super

* An assistance which, by the way, could not have been rendered, had not the English approached from the south-east; since, had their march been due north, the whole Scottish army must have been between them and the garrison.

* Many. † Displayed. ‡ Battalions. § Alarmed.

h——Ego Willielmus pro me——————— hominibus meis vniuersis dicto domino meo Regi ————manibus homagium sponte feci et super Dei ewangelia sacramentum prestiti————— —In quorum omnium testimonium sigillum meum, et sigilla Hugonis filii et heredis et Johannis filii mei vna cum sigillis venerabilium patrum Dominorum Dauid et Thome Moraviensis et Rossensis Dei gracia episcoporum presentibus literis sunt appensa. Acta scripta et data apud Aldern in Morauia vltimo die mensis Octobris, Anno Regni dicti domini nostri Regis Roberti Tertio. Testibus venerabilibus patribus supradictis, Domino Bernardo Cancellario Regis, Dominis Willielmo de Haya, Johanne de Striuelyn, Willielmo Wysman, Johanne de Ffenton, Dauid de Berkeley, et Waltro de Berkeley militibus, magistro Waltero Heroe, Decano ecclesie Morauie, magistro Willielmo de Creswel eiusdem ecclesie precentore et multis aliis nobilibus clericis et laicis dictis die et loco congregatis.

The copy of this curious document was supplied by my friend, Mr. Thomson, Deputy Register of Scotland, whose researches into our ancient records are daily throwing new and important light upon the history of the country.

13. The monarch rode along the van.—P. 280.

The English vanguard, commanded by the earls of Gloucester and Hereford, came in sight of the Scottish army upon the evening of the 23d of June. Bruce was then riding upon a little palfrey, in front of his foremost line, putting his host in order. It was then that the personal encounter took place betwixt him and sir Henry de Bohun, a gallant English knight, the issue of which had a great effect upon the spirits of both armies. It is thus recorded by Barbour:

"And when Glosyter and Herfurd were
With their battle approaching near,
Before them all their came riding,
With helm on head, and spear in hand,
Sir Henry the Boune, the worthy,
That was a wight knight, and a hardy:
And to the earl of Herfurd cousin;
Armed in arms good and fine;
Come on a steed, a bow-shot nere,
Before all other that there were,
And knew the king, for that he saw
Him so range his men on row;
And by the crown, that was set
Also upon his bassenet,
And towards him he went on haste.
And the king so apertly
Saw him come, forth all his feres*
In hy† till him the horse he steers.
And when sir Henry saw the king
Come on, forouting abaysing,‡
Till him he rode in full great hy.
He thought that he should well lightly
Win him, and have him at his will,
Since he him horsed saw so ill.
Sprent§ they same intill a ling‖
Sir Henry mised the noble king.
And he, that in his stirrups stood,
With the axe, that was hard and good,
With so great mayn¶ reached him a dint,
That neither hat nor helm might stynt,
That hewy** duche,†† that he him gave,
That nere the head till the harness clave.
The hand-axe shaft fruschyt‡‡ in two;
And he down to the yird gan go
All flatlynys,§§ for him failed might.
This was the first stroke of the fight."
Barbour's Bruce, vol. ii, p. 122.

The Scottish leaders remonstrated with the king upon his temerity. He only answered, "I have broken my good battle-axe."—The English van-guard retreated after witnessing this single combat. Probably their generals did not think it advisable to hazzard an attack, while its unfavourable issue remained upon their minds.

14. "What train of dust, with trumpet-sound
And glimmering spears, is wheeling round
Our left-ward flank?"————P.—281.

While the van of the English army advanced, a detached body attempted to relieve Stirling. Lord Hailes gives the following account of this manœuver and the result, which is accompanied by circumstances highly characteristic of the chivalrous manners of the age, and displays that generosity which reconciles us even to their ferocity upon other occasions.

Bruce had enjoined Randolph, who commanded the left wing of his army, to be vigilant in preventing any advanced parties of the English from throwing succours into the castle of Stirling.

"Eight hundred horsemen, commanded by sir Robert Clifford, were detached from the English army; they made a circuit by the low grounds to the east, and approached the castle. The king perceived their motions, and, coming up to Randolph, angrily exclaimed, 'Thoughtless man! you have suffered the enemy to pass.' Randolph hasted to repair his fault, or perish. As he advanced, the English cavalry wheeled to attack him. Randolph drew up his troops in a circular form, with their spears resting on the ground, and protended on every side. At the first onset, sir William Daynecourt, an English commander of distinguished note, was slain. The enemy, far superior in numbers to Randolph, environed him, and pressed hard on his little band. Douglas saw his jeopardy, and requested the king's permission to go and succour him. 'You shall not move from your ground,' cried the king; 'let Randolph extricate himself as he best may. I will not alter my order of battle, and lose the advantage of my position.'—'In truth,' replied Douglas, 'I cannot stand by and see Randolph perish; and, therefore, with your leave, I must aid him.' The king unwillingly consented, and Douglas flew to the assistance of his friend. While approaching, he perceived that the English were falling into disorder, and that the perseverance of Randolph had prevailed over their impetuous courage. 'Halt,' cried Douglas, 'those brave men have repulsed the enemy; let us not diminish their glory by sharing it.'"—Dalrymple's *Annals of Scotland*, 4to, Edinburgh, 1779, pp. 44, 45.

Two large stones erected at the north end of the village of Newhouse, about a quarter of a mile from the south part of Stirling, ascertain the place of this memorable skirmish. The circumstance tends, were confirmation necessary, to support the opinion of lord Hailes, that the Scottish line had Stirling on its left flank. It will be remembered that Randolph commanded infantry, Daynecourt cavalry. Supposing, therefore, according to the vulgar hypothesis, that the Scottish line was drawn up, facing to the south, in the line of the brook of Bannock, and, consequently, that Randolph was stationed with his left flank resting upon Milntown bog, it is morally impossible that his infantry, moving from that position, with whatever celerity, could cut off from Stirling a body of cavalry who had already passed St. Ninians,* or, in

*Comrades. † Haste. ‡ Without shrinking. § Spurred. ‖ Line. ¶ Moan. ** Heavy. †† Clash. ‡‡ Broken. §§ Flat.

* Barbour says expressly, they avoided the New Park, (where Bruce's army lay) and held "well neath the Kirk," which can only mean St. Ninians.

other words, were already between them and the town. Whereas, supposing Randolph's left to have approached St. Ninians, the short movement to Newhouse could easily be executed, so as to intercept the English in the manner described.

15. Responsive from the Scottish host,
Pipe-clang and bugle-sound were tosseo.—P. 281.

There is an old tradition, that the well-known Scottish tune of "Hey, tutti,taitti," was Bruce's march at the battle of Bannockburn. The late Mr. Ritson, no granter of propositions, doubts whether the Scots had any martial music, quotes Froissart's account of each soldier in the host bearing a little horn, on which, at the onset, they would make such a horrible noise, as if all the devils of hell had been among them. He observes, that these horns are the only music mentioned by Barbour, and concludes, that it must remain a moot point whether Bruce's army were cheered by the sound even of a solitary bagpipe.—*Historical Essay prefixed to Ritson's Scottish Songs.*

It may be observed in passing, that the Scottish of this period certainly observed some musical cadence, even in winding their horns, since Bruce was at once recognised by his followers from his mode of blowing. See Note 10, on Canto 4.

But the tradition, true or false, has been the means of securing to Scotland one of the finest lyrics in the language, the celebrated war-song of Bruce,—

Scots wha hae wi' Wallace bled.

16. Now onward, and in open view,
The countless ranks of England drew.—P. 281.

Upon the 24th of June, the English army advanced to the attack. The narrowness of the Scottish front and the nature of the ground, did not permit them to have the full advantage of their numbers, nor is it very easy to find out what was their proposed order of battle. The van-guard, however, appeared a distinct body, consisting of archers and spearmen on foot, and commanded, as already said, by the earls of Gloucester and Hereford. Barbour, in one place, mentions that they formed nine BATTLES, or divisions; but, from the following passage, it appears that there was no room or space for them to extend themselves, so that, except the van-guard, the whole army appeared to form one solid and compact body:—

The English men, on either party,
That as angels shone brightly,
Were not arrayed on such manner;
For all their battles samyn* were
In a schiltrum.† But whether it was
Through the great straitness of the place
That they were in, to bide fighting;
Or that it was for abaysing;‡
I wete not. But in a schiltrum
It seemed they were all and some;
Out ta'en the va'ward anerly*
That right with a great company,
He them selwyn arrayed were.
Who had been by, might have seen there
That folk ourtake a meikill feild
On breadth, where many a shining shield,
And many a burnished bright armour,
And many a man of great valour,
Might in that great schiltrum be seen:
And many a bright banner and sheen.
Barbour's Bruce, vol. ii, p. 137.

17. See where yon barefoot abbot stands,
And blesses them with lifted hands!—P. 281.

"Maurice, abbot of Inchaffray, placing himself on an eminence, celebrated mass in sight of the Scottish army. He then passed along the front, barefooted, and bearing a crucifix in his hands, and exhorting the Scots, in few and forcible words, to combat for their rights and their liberty. The Scots kneeled down. 'They yield,' cried Edward; 'see, they implore mercy.' 'They do,' answered Ingelram de Umfraville, 'but not ours. On that field they will be victorious, or die.' "—*Annals of Scotland*, vol. ii, p. 47.

18. "Forth, marshal, on the peasant foe!
We'll tame the terrors of their bow,
And cut the bow-string loose!"—P. 282.

The English archers commenced the attack with their usual bravery and dexterity. But against a force, whose importance he had learned by fatal experience, Bruce was provided. A small but select body of cavalry were detached from the right, under command of sir Robert Keith. They rounded, as I conceive, the marsh called Milntown bog, and, keeping the firm ground, charged the left flank and rear of the English archers. As the bowmen had no spears, nor long weapons, fit to defend themselves against horse, they were instantly thrown into disorder, and spread through the whole English army a confusion, from which they never fairly recovered.

"The English archers shot so fast,
That might their shot have any last,
It had been hard to Scottis men.
But king Robert, that well gan ken,†
That their shot right hard and grievous,
Ordained, foroutb‡ the assembly,
His marschall, with a great menzie,
Five hundred armed into steel,
That on light horse were horsed well,
For to pryk§ among the archers,
And to assail them with their spears
That they no leisure have till shoot.
This marischell, that I of mute,‖
That sir Robert of Keith was called,
As I befor here has you told,
When he saw the battles so
Assembled, and together go,
And saw the archers shoot stoutly;
With all them of his company,
In haste upon them gan he ride,
And overtooke them at a side;¶
And rushed among them so rudely,
Sticking them so dispiteously,
And in such fusion** bearing downe
And slaying them, forouttn ransoun:††
That they them scalyt‡‡ euerilkane,§§
And from that time forth there was na
That assembled shot to ma‖‖
When Scotts archers saw that they sua
Were rebutyt,¶¶ they wax hardy,
And with all their might shot eagrele
Among the horsemen that there rode,
And wounds wide to them they made,
And slew of them a full great deal."
Barbour's Bruce, pp. 147, 8.

* Together.

† *Schiltrum.*—This word has been variously limited or extended in its signification. In general, it seems to imply a large body of men drawn up very closely together. But it has been limited to imply a round or circular body of men so drawn up. I cannot understand it with this limitation in the present case. The schiltrum of the Scottish army at Falkirk was undoubtedly of a circular form, in order to resist the attacks of the English cavalry, on whatever quarter they might be charged. But it does not appear how, or why, the English advancing to the attack at Bannockburn should have arrayed themselves in a circular form. It seems more probable that, by *schiltrum*, in the present case, Barbour means to express an irregular mass into which the English army was compressed by the unwieldiness of its numbers, and the carelessness or ignorance of its leaders.

‡ Frightening.

* Alone. † Know. ‡ Disjointed from their main body.
§ Spur. ‖ That I speak of. ¶ Set upon their flank.
** Numbers. †† Ransom. ‡‡ Dispersed.
§§ Every one. ‖‖ Make. ¶¶ Driven back.

Although the success of this manœuvre was evident, it is very remarkable that the Scottish generals do not appear to have profited by the lesson. Almost every subsequent battle which they lost against England was decided by the archers, to whom the close and compact array of the Scottish phalanx afforded an exposed and unresisting mark. The bloody battle of Halidon-hill, fought scarce twenty years afterward, was so completely gained by the archers, that the English are said to have lost only one knight, one esquire, and a few foot-soldiers. At the battle of Neville's Cross, in 1346, where David II was defeated and made prisoner, John de Graham, observing the loss which the Scots sustained from the English bowmen, offered to charge and disperse them, if a hundred men-at-arms were put under his command. "*But*, to confess the truth," says Fordun, "he could not procure a single horseman for the service proposed." Of such little use is experience in war, where its results are opposed by habit or prejudice.

19. Each braggart churl could boast before,
Twelve Scottish lives his baldric bore!—P. 282.

Roger Ascham quotes a similar Scottish proverb, "whereby they give the whole praise of shooting honestly to Englishmen, saying thus, 'that every English archer beareth under his girdle twenty-four Scottes.' Indeed, Toxophilus says before, and truly of the Scottish nation, 'the Scottes surely be good men of warre in theyre owne feates as can be; but as for shootinge, they can neither use it to any profite, nor yet challenge it for any praise.' "—*Works of Ascham, edited by Bennet*, 4to. p. 110.

It is said, I trust incorrectly, by an ancient English historian, that the "good lord James of Douglas" dreaded the superiority of the English archers so much, that when he made any of them prisoner, he gave him the option of losing the fore-finger of his right hand, or his right eye, either species of mutilation rendering him incapable to use the bow. I have mislaid the reference to this singular passage.

20. Down! down! in headlong overthrow,
Horseman and horse, the foremost go.—P. 282.

It is generally alleged by historians, that the English men-at-arms fell into the hidden snare which Bruce had prepared for them. Barbour does not mention this circumstance. According to his account, Randolph, seeing the slaughter made by the cavalry on the right wing among the archers, advanced courageously against the main body of the English, and entered into close combat with them. Douglas and Stuart, who commanded the Scottish centre, led their division also to the charge, and the battle becoming general along the whole line, was obstinately maintained on both sides for a long space of time; the Scottish archers doing great execution among the English men-at-arms, after the bowmen of England were dispersed.

21. And steeds that *shriek* in agony.—P. 282.

I have been told that this line requires an explanatory note; and, indeed, those who witness the silent patience with which horses submit to the most cruel usage may be permitted to doubt that, in moments of sudden or intolerable anguish, they utter a most melancholy cry. Lord Erskine, in a speech made in the House of Lords, upon a bill for enforcing humanity towards animals, noticed this remarkable fact, in language which I will not mutilate by attempting to repeat it. It was my fortune, upon one occasion, to hear a horse, in a moment of agony, utter a thrilling scream, which I still consider the most melancholy sound I ever heard.

22. Lord of the Isles, my trust in thee
Is firm as Ailsa-rock;
Rush on with highland sword and targe;
I, with my Carrick spearmen, charge.—P. 283.

When the engagement between the main bodies had lasted some time, Bruce made a decisive movement, by bringing up the Scottish reserve. It is traditionally said, that at this crisis he addressed the lord of the Isles in a phrase used as a motto by some of his descendants, "My trust is constant in thee." Barbour intimates, that the reserve "assembled on one field," that is, in the same line with the Scottish forces already engaged, which leads Lord Hailes to conjecture, that the Scottish ranks must have been much thinned by slaughter, since, in that circumscribed ground, there was room for the reserve to fall into the line. But the advance of the Scottish cavalry must have contributed a good deal to form the vacancy occupied by the reserve.

23. To arms they flew,—axe, club, or spear,—
And mimic ensigns high they rear.—P. 283.

The followers of the Scottish camp observed, from the Gillies' hill in the rear, the impression produced upon the English army by the bringing up of the Scottish reserve, and, prompted by the enthusiasm of the moment, or the desire of plunder, assumed, in a tumultuary manner, such arms as they found nearest, fastened sheets to tent-poles, and lances, and showed themselves like a new army advancing to battle.

Yeomen, and swanys,* and pitaill,†
That in the park yemet victual,‡
Were left; when they wist but lesing§
That their lords with full fighting
On their foes assembled were;
One of their selwyn‖ that were there
Captain of them all they made.
And sheets, that were somedale¶ braid,
They fastened instead of banners
Upon long trees and spears.
And said that they would see the fight,
And help their lords at their might.
When here—till all assented were,
In a rout assembled er,**
Fifteen thousand they were, or ma,
And than in great haste gan they go,
With their banners, all in a route,
As they had men been styve†† and stout.
They came with all that assembly,
Right till they might the battle see;
Then all at once they gave a cry,
"Slay! Slay! Upon them hastily!"
Barbour's Bruce, vol. ii, Book xiii, pp. 153, 4.

The unexpected apparition, of what seemed a new army, completed the confusion which already prevailed among the English, who fled in every direction, and were pursued with immense slaughter. The brook of Bannock, according to Barbour, was so choked with the bodies of men and horses, that it might have been passed dry-shod. The followers of the Scottish camp fell upon the disheartened fugitives, and added to the confusion and slaughter. Many were driven into the Forth, and perished there, which, by the way, could hardly have happened, had the armies been drawn up east and west, since in that case, to get at the river, the English fugitives must have fled through

* Swains. † Rabble. ‡ Kept the provisions. § Lying.
‖ Selves. ¶ Somewhat. ** Are. †† Stiff.

the victorious army. About a short mile from the field of battle is a place called the Bloody Folds. Here the earl of Gloucester is said to have made a stand, and died gallantly at the head of his own military tenants and vassals. He was much regretted by both sides; and it is said the Scottish would gladly have saved his life, but neglecting to wear his surcoat with armorial bearings over his armour, he fell unknown, after his horse had been stabbed with spears.

Sir Marmaduke Twenge, an English knight, contrived to conceal himself during the fury of the pursuit, and when it was somewhat slackened, approached king Robert. "Whose prisoner are you, sir Marmaduke?" said Bruce, to whom he was personally known. "Yours, sir," answered the knight. "I receive you," answered the king; and, treating him with the utmost courtesy, loaded him with gifts, and dismissed him without ransom. The other prisoners were well treated. There might be policy in this, as Bruce would naturally wish to acquire the good opinion of the English barons, who were at this time at great variance with their king. But it also well accords with his high chivalrous character.

24. O! give their hapless prince his due.—P. 283.

Edward II, according to the best authorities, showed, in the fatal field of Bannockburn, personal gallantry not unworthy of his great sire and greater son. He remained on the field till forced away by the earl of Pembroke, when all was lost. He then rode to the castle of Stirling, and demanded admittance; but the governor remonstrating upon the imprudence of shutting himself up in that fortress, which must so soon surrender, he assembled around his person five hundred men-at-arms, and, avoiding the field of battle and the victorious army, fled towards Linlithgow, pursued by Douglas with about sixty horse. They were augmented by sir Lawrence Abernethy with twenty more, whom Douglas met in the Torwood, upon their way to join the English army, and whom he easily persuaded to desert the defeated monarch, and to assist in the pursuit. They hung upon Edward's flight as far as Dunbar, too few in number to assail him with effect, but enough to harass his retreat so constantly, that whoever fell an instant behind, was instantly slain, or made prisoner. Edward's ignominious flight terminated at Dunbar, where the earl of March, who still professed allegiance to him, "received him full gently." From thence, the monarch of so great an empire, and the late commander of so gallant and numerous an army, escaped to Bamborough in a fishing vessel.

Bruce, as will appear from the following document, lost no time in directing the thunders of parliamentary censure against such parts of his subjects as did not return to their natural allegiance, after the battle of Bannockburn.

APUD MONASTERIUM DE CAMBUSKENNETH, XVI DIE NOVEMBRIS M.CCC.XIV.

Judicium redditum apud Kambuskinet contra omnes illos qui tunc fuerunt contra fidem et pacem Domini Regis.

Anno gracie millesimo tricentesimo quarto decimo sexto die Novembris tenente parliamentum suum excellentissimo principe domino Roberto Dei gracia Rege Scottorum Illustri in monasterio de Cambuskyneth concordatum fuit finaliter judicatum [ac super] hoc statutum de consilio et assensu episcoporum et ceterorum prelatorum comitum baronum et aliorum nobilium regni Scocie nec non et tocius communitatis regni predicti quod omnes qui contra fidem et pacem dicti domini regis in bello sue alibi mortui sunt [vel qui dic] to die ad pacem ejus et fidem non venerant licet sepius vocati et legitime expectati fuissent de terris et tenementis et omni alio statu intra regnum Scocie perpetuo sint exheredati et habeantur de cetero tanquam inimici regis et regni ab omni vendicacione juris hereditarii vel juris alterius cujuscunque in posterum pro se et heredibus suis in perpetuum privati ad perpetuam igitur rei memoriam et evidentem probacionem hujus judicii et statuti sigilla episcoporum et aliorum prelatorum nec non et comitum baronum ac ceterorum nobilium dicti regni presenti ordinacioni judicio et statuto sunt appensa.

Sigillum Domini Regis
Sigillum Willelmi Episcopi Sancti Andree
Sigillum Roberti Episcopi Glascuensis
Sigillum Willelmi Episcopi Dunkeldensis
\- - - Episcopi
\- - - Episcopi
\- - - Episcopi
Sigillum Alani Episcopi Sodorensis
Sigillum Johannis Episcopi Brechynensis
Sigillum Andree Episcopi Ergadiensis
Sigillum Frechardi Episcopi Cathanensis
Sigillum Abbatis de Scona
Sigillum Abbatis de Calco
Sigillum Abbatis de Abirbrothok
Sigillum Abbatis de Sancta Cruce
Sigillum Abbatis de Londoris
Sigillum Abbatis de Newbotill
Sigillum Abbatis de Cupro
Sigillum Abbatis de Paslet
Sigillum Abbatis de Dumfermelyn
Sigillum Abbatis de Lincluden
Sigillum Abbatis de Insula Missarum
Sigillum Abbatis de Sancto Columba
Sigillum Abbatis de Deer
Sigillum Abbatis de Dulce Corde
Sigillum Prioris de Coldinghame
Sigillum Prioris de Rostynot
Sigillum Prioris Sancti Andree
Sigillum Prioris de Pettinwem
Sigillum Prioris de Insula de Lochlevin
Sigillum Senescalli Scocie
Sigillum Willelmi Comitis de Ros
\- - - - - - - - - - -
\- - - - - - - - - - -
\- - - - - - - - - - -
Sigillum Gilberti de la Haya Constabularii Scocie
Sigillum Roberti de Keth Mariscalli Scocie
Sigillum Hugonis de Ros
Sigillum Jacobi de Duglas
Sigillum Johannis de Sancto Claro
Sigillum Thome de Ros
Sigillum Alexandri de Settone
Sigillum Walteri Haliburtone
Sigillum Davidis de Balfour
Sigillum Duncani de Wallays
Sigillum Thome de Dischingtone
Sigillum Andree de Moravia
Sigillum Archibaldi de Betun
Sigillum Ranulphi de Lyill
Sigillum Malcomi de Balfour
Sigillum Normanni de Lesley

Sigillum Nigelli de Campo bello
Sigillum Morni de Musco Campo.
- - - - - - - - - -
- - - - - - - - - -

25. Nor for De Argentine alone,
Through Nimian's church these torches shone,
And rose the death-prayer's awful tone.—P. 284.

The remarkable circumstances attending the death of De Argentine have been already noticed, (p. 291.) Besides this renowned warrior, there fell many representatives of the noblest houses in England, which never sustained a more bloody and disastrous defeat. Barbour says that two hundred pairs of gilded spurs were taken from the field of battle; and that some were left the author can bear witness, who has in his possession a curious antique spur, dug up in the morass not long since.

"It was forsooth a great ferlie,
To see samyn* sa fele dead lie.
Two hundred spurs that were reid†
Were taen of knights that were dead."

I am now to take my leave of Barbour, not without a sincere wish that the public may encourage the undertaking of my friend, Dr. Jamieson, who has issued proposals for publishing an accurate edition of his poem, and of Blind Harry's Wallace. The only good edition of the Bruce was published by Mr. Pinkerton, in 3 vols., in 1790; and the learned editor having had no personal access to consult the manuscript, it is not without errors; and it has besides become scarce. Of Wallace there is no tolerable edition; yet these two poems do no small honour to the early state of Scottish poetry, and the Bruce is justly regarded as containing authentic historical facts.‡

The following list of the slain at Bannockburn, extracted from the continuator of Trivet's Annals, will show the extent of the national calamity.

"List of the Slain.

Barons and knight bannerets.
Gilbert de Clare, earl of Gloucester,
Robert de Clifford,
Payan Tybetot,
William le Mareschal,
John Comyn,
William de Vescey,
John de Montfort,
Nicolas de Hasteleigh,
William Daynecourt,
Ægidius de Argenteyne,
Edmund Comyn,
John Lovel, (the rich)
Edmond de Hastynge,
Milo de Stapleton,
Simon Ward,
Robert de Felton,
Michael Poyning,
Edmund Maulley.

Knights.
Henry de Boun,
Thomas de Ufford,
John de Elsingfelde,
John de Harcourt,
Walter de Hakelut,
Philip de Courtenay,
Hugo de Scales,
Radulph de Beauchamp,
John de Penbrigge,
With thirty-three others of the same rank, not named.

PRISONERS.

Barons and baronets.
Henry de Boun, earl of Hereford,
Lord John Giffard,
William de Latimer,
Maurice de Berkley,
Ingelram de Umfraville,
Marmaduke de Twenge,
John de Wyletone,
Robert de Maulee,
Henry Fitz-Hugh,
Thomas de Gray,
Walter de Beauchamp,
Richard de Charon,
John de Wevelmton,
Robert de Nevil,
John de Segrave,
Gilbert Peeche,
John de Clavering,
Antony de Lucy,
Radulph de Camys,
John de Evere,
Andrew de Abremhyn.

Knights.
Thomas de Berkely,
The son of Roger Tyrrel,
Anselm de Mareschal,
Giles de Beauchamp,
John Cyfrewast,
John Bluwet,
Roger Corbet,
Gilbert de Boun,
Bartholomew de Enefield,
Thomas de Ferrers,
Radulph and Thomas Bottetort,
John and Nicholas de Kingstone, (brothers,)
William Lovel,
Henry de Wileton,
Baldwin de Frevill,
John de Clivedon,*
Adomar la Zouche,
John de Merewode,
John Maufe,†
Thomas and Odo Lele Ercedekene,
Robert Beaupel, (the son,)
John Mautrevers, (the son,)
William and William Giffard.
And thirty-four other knights, not named by the historian.

And in sum, there were there slain, along with the earl of Gloucester, forty-two barons and bannerets. The number of earls, barons, and bannerets made captive, was twenty-two, and sixty-eight knights. Many clerks and esquires were also there slain or taken. Roger de Northburge, keeper of the king's signet, (*custos targiæ domini regis,*) was made prisoner with his two clerks, Roger de Wakenfelde and Thomas de Swinton, upon which the king caused a seal to be made, and entitled it his *privy seal*, to distinguish the same from the signet so lost. The earl of Hereford was exchanged against Bruce's queen, who had been detained in captivity ever since the year 1306. The *targia*, or signet, was restored to England through the intercession of Ralph de Monthermer, ancestor of lord Moira, who is said to have found favour in the eyes of the Scottish king."—*Continuation of Trivet's Annals, Hall's edit.* Oxford, 1712, vol. ii, p. 14.

Such were the immediate consequences of the field of Bannockburn. Its more remote effects, in completely establishing the national independence of Scotland, afford a boundless field for speculation.

Thomas the Rhymer.

IN THREE PARTS.

PART I.

Few personages are so renowned in tradition as Thomas of Ercildoun, known by the appellation of *The Rhymer*. Uniting, or supposed to unite, in his person, the powers of poetical composition, and of vaticination, his memory, even after the lapse of five hundred years, is regarded with veneration by his countrymen. To give any thing like a certain history of this remarkable man, would be indeed

* Together. † Red, or gilded.

‡ Both these works have now been published, in a splendid form, and with extreme accuracy, by the learned and reverend doctor.

* Supposed Clinton. † Maul.

difficult; but the curious may derive some satisfaction from the particulars here brought together.

It is agreed, on all hands, that the residence, and probably the birth-place, of this ancient bard, was Ercildoun, a village situated upon the Leader, two miles above its junction with the Tweed. The ruins of an ancient tower are still pointed out as the Rhymer's castle. The uniform tradition bears, that his surname was Lermont, or Learmont; and that the appellation of *The Rhymer* was conferred on him in consequence of his poetical compositions. There remains, nevertheless, some doubt upon this subject. In a charter, which is subjoined at length,* the son of our poet designs himself, "Thomas of Ercildoun, son and heir of Thomas Rymour of Ercildoun," which seems to imply, that the father did not bear the hereditary name of Learmont; or, at least, was better known and distinguished by the epithet which he had acquired by his personal accomplishments. I must, however, remark, that, down to a very late period, the practice of distinguishing the parties, even in formal writings, by the epithets which had been bestowed on them from personal circumstances, instead of the proper surnames of their families, was common, and indeed necessary, among the border clans. So early as the end of the thirteenth century, when surnames were hardly introduced in Scotland, this custom must have been universal. There is, therefore, nothing inconsistent in supposing our poet's name to have been actually Learmont, although, in this charter, he is distinguished by the popular appellation of *The Rhymer*.

We are better able to ascertain the period at which Thomas of Ercildoun lived; being the latter end of the thirteenth century. I am inclined to place his death a little farther back than Mr. Pinkerton, who supposes that he was alive in 1300; (*List of Scottish Poets:*) which is hardly, I think, consistent with the charter already quoted, by which his son, in 1299, for himself and his heirs, conveys to the convent of the Trinity of Soltre, the tenement which he possessed by inheritance (*hereditarie*) in Ercildoun, with all claim which he, or his predecessors, could pretend thereto. From this we may infer, that the Rhymer was now dead; since we find his son disposing of the family property. Still, however, the argument of the learned historian will remain unimpeached, as to the time of the poet's birth. For if, as we learn from Barbour,† his propheeies were held in reputation as early as 1306, when Bruce slew the Red Comyn, the sanctity, and (let me add to Mr. Pinkerton's words) the uncertainty of antiquity, must have already involved his character and writings. In a charter of Peter de Haga de Bemersyde, which unfortunately wants a date, the Rhymer, a near neighbour, and, if we may trust tradition, a friend of the family, appears as a witness.—*Chartulary of Melrose.*

It cannot be doubted, that Thomas of Ercildoun was a remarkable and important person in his own time, since, very shortly after his death, we find him celebrated as a prophet, and as a poet. Whether he himself made any pretensions to the first of those characters, or whether it was gratuitously conferred upon him by the credulity of posterity, it seems difficult to decide. If we may believe Mackenzie, Learmont only versified the propheeies delivered by Eliza, an inspired nun, of a convent at Haddington. But of this there seems not to be the most distant proof. On the contrary, all ancient authors, who quote the Rhymer's propheeies, uniformly suppose them to have been emitted by himself. Thus, in Winton's *Chronicle*,

> Of this fycht quilum spak Thomas
> Of Ersyldoune, that sayd in Derne,
> Thare suld meit stalwarthly, starke, and sterne.
> He sayd it in his prophecy;
> But how he wist it was *ferly*.
>
> Book viii, chap. 32.

There could have been no *ferly*, (marvel,) in Winton's eyes at least, how Thomas came by his knowledge of future events, had he ever heard of the inspired nun of Haddington; which, it cannot be doubted, would have been a solution of the mystery, much to the taste of the prior of Lochlevin.*

Whatever doubts, however, the learned might have, as to the source of the Rhymer's prophetic skill, the vulgar had no hesitation to ascribe the whole to the intercourse between the bard and the queen of Faery. The popular tale bears, that Thomas was carried off, at an early age, to the Fairy Land, where he acquired all the knowledge which made him afterwards so famous. After seven years residence he was permitted to return to the earth, to enlighten and astonish his countrymen by his prophetic powers; still, however, remaining bound to return to his royal mistress, when she should intimate her pleasure.† Accordingly, while Thomas was making merry with his friends in the tower of Ercildoun, a person came running in, and told, with marks of fear and astonishment, that a hart and hind had left the neighbouring forest, and were composedly and slowly parading the street of the village.‡ The prophet instantly arose, left his habitation, and followed the wonderful animals to the forest, whence he was never seen to return. According to the popular belief, he still "drees

* *From the Chartulary of the Trinity House of Soltre, Advocates' Library*, W. 4. 14.

ERSYLTON.

Omnibus has literas visuris vel audituris Thomas de Ercildoun filius et heres Thomæ Rymour de Ercildoun salutem in Domino. Noveritis me per fustem et baculum in pleno judicio resignasse ac per presentes quietem clamasse pro me et heredibus meis Magistro domus Sanctæ Trinitatis de Soltre et fratribus ejusdem domus totam terram meam cum omnibus pertinentibus suis quam in tenemento de Ercildoun hereditarie tenui renunciando de toto pro me et heredibus meis omni jure et clameo quæ ego seu antecessores mei in eadem terra aliquo tempore de perpetuo habuimus sive de futuro habere possumus. In cujus rei testimonio presentibus his sigillum meum apposui data apud Ercildoun die Martis proximo post festum Sanctorum Apostolorum Symonis et Jude Anno Domini Millesimo cc. Nonagesimo Nono.

† The lines alluded to are these:

> I hope that Tomas's prophesie,
> Of Ercildoun shall truly be.
> In him, &c,

* Henry, the minstrel, who introduces Thomas into the history of Wallace, expresses the same doubt as to the source of his prophetic knowledge.

> Thomas Rhymer into the faile was than
> With the minister, which was a worthy man.
> He used oft to that religious place;
> The people deemed of wit he meikle can,
> And so he told, though that they bless or ban,
> Which happened sooth in many divers case;
> I cannot say by wrong or righteousness.
> In rule of war whether they tint or wan:
> It may be deemed by division of grace, &c.
>
> *History of Wallace*, Book ii.

† See a Dissertation on Fairies, prefixed to the ballad of TAMLANE, *Minstrelsy of the Border*, vol. ii, p. 237.

‡ There is a singular resemblance betwixt this tradition, and an incident occurring in the life of Merlin Caledonius, which the reader will find a few pages onward.

his weird" in Fairy Land, and is expected one day to revisit earth. In the mean while, his memory is held in the most profound respect. The Eildon tree, from beneath the shade of which he delivered his prophecies, now no longer exists; but the spot is marked by a large stone, called Eildon tree stone. A neighbouring rivulet takes the name of the Bogle Burn, (Goblin Brook) from the Rhymer's supernatural visitants. The veneration paid to his dwelling-place even attached itself in some degree to a person, who, within the memory of man, chose to set up his residence in the ruins of Learmont's tower. The name of this man was Murray, a kind of herbalist; who, by dint of some knowledge in simples, the possession of a musical clock, an electrical machine, and a stuffed alligator, added to a supposed communication with Thomas the Rhymer, lived for many years in very good credit as a wizard.

It seemed to the author unpardonable to dismiss a person, so important in border tradition as the Rhymer, without some farther notice than a simple commentary upon the following ballad. It is given from a copy, obtained from a lady, residing not far from Ercildoun, corrected and enlarged by one in Mrs. Brown's MSS. The former copy, however, as might be expected, is far more minute as to local description.* To this old tale the author has ventured to add a second part, consisting of a kind of cento, from the printed prophecies vulgarly ascribed to the Rhymer; and a third part, entirely modern, founded upon the tradition of his having returned with the hart and hind to the land of Faerie. To make his peace with the more severe antiquaries, the author has prefixed to the second part some remarks on Learmont's prophecies.

PART I.—ANCIENT.

TRUE Thomas lay on Huntlie bank;
A ferlie he spied wi' his ee;
And there he saw a ladye bright,
Come riding down by the Eildon tree.

Her shirt was o' the grass-green silk,
Her mantle o' the velvet fyne;
At ilka tett of her horse's mane,
Hang fifty siller bells and nine.

True Thomas he pulled aff his cap,
And louted low down to his knee,
"All hail, thou mighty queen of heaven!
For thy peer on earth I never did see."

"O no, O no, Thomas," she said;
"That name does not belang to me;
I am but the queen of fair Elfland,
That am hither come to visit thee.

"Harp and carp, Thomas," she said;
"Harp and carp along with me;
And if ye dare to kiss my lips,
Sure of your body I will be."

"Betide me weal, betide me wo,
That weird† shall never daunton me."
Syne he has kissed her rosy lips,
All underneath the Eildon tree.

"Now, ye maun go wi' me," she said;
"True Thomas, ye maun go wi' me;
And ye maun serve me seven years,
Through weal or wo as may chance to be."

She mounted on her milk-white steed;
She's ta'en true Thomas up behind;
And aye, whene'er her bridle rung,
The steed flew swifter than the wind.

O they rade on, and farther on;
The steed gaed swifter than the wind;
Until they reached a desert wide,
And living land was left behind.

"Light down, light down, now, true Thomas,
And lean your head upon my knee:
Abide, and rest a little space,
And I will show you ferlies three.

"O see ye not yon narrow road,
So thick beset with thorns and briers?
That is the path of righteousness,
Though after it but few inquires.

"And see not ye that braid, braid road,
That lies across that lily leven?
That is the path of wickedness,
Though some call it the road to heaven.

"And see not ye that bonny road,
That winds about the fernie brae?
That is the road to fair Elfland,
Where thou and I this night maun gae:

"But, Thomas, ye maun hold your tongue,
Whatever ye may hear or see:
For, if you speak word in Elflyn land,
Ye'll ne'er get back to your ain countrie."

O they rade on, and farther on,
And they waded through rivers aboon the knee,
And they saw neither sun nor moon,
But they heard the roaring of the sea.

It was mirk, mirk night, and there was nae stern light,
And they waded through red blude to the knee,
For a' the blude that's shed on earth,
Rins through the springs o' that countrie.

Syne they came on to a garden green,
And she pu'd an apple frae a tree:
"Take this for thy wages, true Thomas;
It will give thee the tongue that can never lie."

"My tongue is mine ain," true Thomas said;
"A gudely gift ye wad gie to me!
I neither dought to buy nor sell,
At fair or tryst, where I may be.

"I dought neither speak to prince or peer,
Nor ask of grace from fair ladye."
"Now hold thy peace!" the ladye said,
"For, as I say, so must it be."

He has gotten a coat of the even cloth,
And a pair of shoes of velvet green;
And, till seven years were gane and past,
True Thomas on earth was never seen.

PART II.

The prophecies, ascribed to Thomas of Ercildoun, have been the principal means of securing to him remembrance "amongst the sons of his people." The author of *Sir Tristrem* would long ago have joined, in the vale of oblivion, "Clerk of Tranent, who wrote the adventures of *Schir Gawain*," if, by good hap, the same current of

* The author has been since informed, by a most eminent antiquary, that there is in existence a MS. copy of this ballad, of very considerable antiquity, of which he hopes to avail himself on some future occasion.

† *That weird, &c.* That destiny shall never frighten me.

ideas respecting antiquity, which causes Virgil to be regarded as a magician by the Lazzaroni of Naples, had not exalted the bard of Ercildoun to the prophetic character. Perhaps, indeed, he himself affected it during his life. We know at least, for certain, that a belief in his supernatural knowledge was current soon after his death. His prophecies are alluded to by Barbour, by Wintoun, and by Henry the minstrel, or *Blind Harry*, as he is usually termed. None of these authors, however, give the words of any of the Rhymer's vaticinations, but merely relate historically his having predicted the events of which they speak. The earliest of the prophecies ascribed to him, which is now extant, is quoted by Mr. Pinkerton from a MS. It is supposed to be a response from Thomas of Ercildoun, to a question from the heroic countess of March, renowned for the defence of the castle of Dunbar, against the English, and termed, in the familiar dialect of her time, *Black Agnes of Dunbar*. This prophecy is remarkable, in so far as it bears very little resemblance to any verses published in the printed copy of the Rhymer's supposed prophecies. The verses are as follows:

"*La countesse de Donbar demande à Thomas de Essedoune quant la g.erre d'Escoce prendreit fyn. E yl la repoundy et dyt.*

"When man is mad a kyng of a capped man;
When man is levere other mones thyng than is owen:
When londe thouys forest, ant forest is folde;
When hares kendles o' the her'ston;
When Wytt and Wille werres togedere:
When mon makes stables of kyrkes; and steles castels with stves;
When Rokesboroughe nys no burgh ant market is at Forwyleye:
When Bambourne is donged with dede men;
When men ledes men in ropes to buyen and to sellen;
When a quarter of whaty whete is chaunged for a colt of ten markes;
When prude(pride) prikes and pees is leyd in prisoun;
When a Scot ne me hym hude ase hare in forme that the English ne shall hym fynde;
When rycht and wronge astente the togedere;
When laddes weddeth lovedies;
When Scoties flen so faste, that for faute of shep, hy drowneth hemselve;
When shal this be?
Nonther in thine tyme ne in mine;
Ah comen ant gone
Withinne twenty winter ant one."

Pinkerton's Poems, from Maitland's MSS. quoting from Harl. Lib. 2253. f. 127.

As I have never seen the MS. from which Mr. Pinkerton makes this extract, and as the date of it is fixed by him (certainly one of the most able antiquaries of our age) to the reign of Edward I or II, it is with great diffidence that I hazard a contrary opinion. There can, however, I believe, be little doubt, that these prophetic verses are a forgery, and not the production of our Thomas the Rhymer. But I am inclined to believe them of a later date than the reign of Edward I or II.

The gallant defence of the castle of Dunbar, by Black Agnes, took place in the year 1337. The Rhymer died previous to the year 1299 (see the charter, by his son, in the introduction to the foregoing ballad.) It seems, therefore, very improbable, that the countess of Dunbar could ever have an opportunity of consulting Thomas the Rhymer, since that would infer that she was married, or at least engaged in state matters, previous to 1299; whereas, she is described as a young, or a middle-aged woman, at the period of her being beseiged in the fortress, which she so well defended. If the editor might indulge a conjecture, he would suppose, that the prophecy was contrived for the encouragement of the English invaders, during the Scottish wars; and that the names of the countess of Dunbar, and of Thomas of Ercildoun, were used for the greater credit of the forgery. According to this hypothesis, it seems likely to have been composed after the siege of Dunbar, which had made the name of the countess well known, and, consequently, in the reign of Edward III. The whole tendency of the prophecy is to aver, "that there shall be no end of the Scottish war, (concerning which the question was proposed,) till a final conquest of the country by England, attended by all the usual severities of war. When the cultivated country shall become forest, says the prophecy; when the wild animals shall inhabit the abode of men; when Scotts shall not be able to escape the English, should they crouch as hares in their form." All these denunciations seem to refer to the time of Edward III, upon whose victories the prediction was probably founded. The mention of the exchange betwixt a colt worth ten markes, and a quarter of "whaty (indifferent) wheat," seems to allude to the dreadful famine about the year 1388. The independence of Scotland was, however, as impregnable to the mines of superstition, as to the steel of our more powerful and more wealthy neighbours. The war of Scotland is, thank God, at an end; but it is ended without her people having either crouched like hares, in their form, or being drowned in their flight "for faute of shep,"—thank God for that too. The prophecy quoted in p. 318, is probably of the same date, and intended for the same purpose. A minute search of the records of the time would, probably, throw additional light upon the allusions contained in these ancient legends. Among various rhymes of prophetic import, which are at this day current amongst the people of Teviotdale, is one, supposed to be pronounced by Thomas the Rhymer, presaging the destruction of his habitation and family:

The hare sall kittle (litter) on my hearth-stane,
And there will never be a laird Learmont again.

The first of these lines is obviously borrowed from that in the MS. of the Harl. library.—"When hares kendles o' the her'ston"—an emphatic image of desolation. It is also inaccurately quoted in the prophecy of Waldhave, published by Andro Hart, 1613:

This is a true talking that Thomas of tells,
The hare shall hirple on the hard (hearth) stane.

Spottiswoode, an honest, but credulous historian, seems to have been a firm believer in the authenticity of the prophetic wares, vended in the name of Thomas of Ercildoun. "The prophecies, yet extant in Scottish rhymes, whereupon he was commonly called *Thomas the Rhymer*, may justly be admired; having foretold, so many ages before, the union of England and Scotland in the ninth degree of the Bruce's blood, with the succession of Bruce himself to the crown, being yet a child, and other divers particulars, which the event hath ratified and made good. Boethius, in his story, relateth his prediction of king Alexander's death, and that he did foretel the same to the earl of March, the day before it fell out; saying, 'that before the next day at noon, such a tempest should blow, as Scotland had not felt for many years before.' The next morning, the day being clear, and no change appearing in the air, the nobleman did challenge Thomas of his saying, calling him an impostor. He replied, that noon was not yet passed

About which time, a post came to advertise the earl of the king his sudden death. 'Then,' said Thomas, 'this is the tempest I foretold; and so shall it prove to Scotland.' Whence, or how, he had this knowledge, can hardly be affirmed; but sure it is, that he did divine and answer truly of many things to come."—*Spottiswoode*, p. 47. Besides that notable voucher, master Hector Boece, the good archbishop might, had he been so minded, have referred to Fordun for the prophecy of king Alexander's death. That historian calls our bard "*ruralis ille vates.*"—*Fordun*, lib. x, cap. 40.

What Spottiswoode calls "the prophecies extant in Scottish rhyme," are the metrical predictions ascribed to the prophet of Ercildoun, which, with many other compositions of the same nature, bearing the names of Bede, Merlin, Gildas, and other approved soothsayers, are contained in one small volume, published by Andro Hart, at Edinburgh, 1615. The late excellent lord Hailes made these compositions the subject of a dissertation, published in his *Remarks on the History of Scotland*. His attention is chiefly directed to the celebrated prophecy of our bard, mentioned by bishop Spottiswoode, bearing, that the crowns of England and Scotland should be united in the person of a king, son of a French queen, and related to Bruce in the ninth degree. Lord Hailes plainly proves, that this prophecy is perverted from its original purpose, in order to apply it to the succession of James VI. The ground-work of the forgery is to be found in the prophecies of Berlington, contained in the same collection, and runs thus:

"Of Bruce's left side shall spring out a leafe,
As neere as the ninth degree;
And shall be fleemed of faire Scotland,
In France farre beyond the sea.
And then shall come againe ryding,
With eyes that many men may see.
At Aberladie he shall light,
With hempen helteres and horse of tre.
— — —
However it happen for to fall,
The lyon shal be lord of all;
The French quen shal bearre the sonne,
Shal rule all Brittaine to the sea;
Ane from the Bruce's blood shal come also,
As neere as the ninth degree.
— — —
Yet shal there come a keene knight over the salt sea,
A keene man of courage and bold man of armes;
A duke's son dowbled (*i. e.* dubbed) a born man in France,
That shal our mirths augment, and mend all our harmes;
After the date of our Lord 1513, and thrice three thereafter;
Which shal brooke all the broad isle to himself,
Between 13 and thrice three the threip shal be ended,
The Saxons sall never recover after."

There cannot be any doubt, that this prophecy was intended to excite the confidence of the Scottish nation in the duke of Albany, regent of Scotland, who arrived from France in 1515, two years after the death of James IV, in the fatal field of Flodden. The regent was descended of Bruce by the left, *i. e.* by the female side, within the ninth degree. His mother was daughter to the earl of Boulogne, his father banished from his country—"fleemit of fair Scotland." His arrival must necessarily be by sea, and his landing was expected at Aberlady, in the Frith of Forth. He was a duke's son, dubbed knight; and nine years from 1513 are allowed him, by the pretended prophet, for the accomplishment of the salvation of his country, and the exaltation of Scotland over her sister and rival. All this was a pious fraud, to excite the confidence and spirit of the country.

The prophecy, put in the name of our Thomas the Rhymer, as it stands in Hart's book, refers to a later period. The narrator meets the Rhymer upon a land, beside a lee, who shows him many emblematical visions, described in no mean strain of poetry. They chiefly relate to the fields of Flodden and Pinkie, to the national distress which followed these defeats, and to future halcyon days, which are promised to Scotland. One quotation or two will be sufficient to establish this fully:

"Our Scottish king sal come ful keene,
The red lion beareth he;
A feddered arrow sharp, I weene,
Shal make him winke and warre to see.
Out of the field he shal be led
When he is bludie and wo for blood;
Yet to his men shall he say,
'For God's luve, turn you againe,
And give yon southerne folk a frey!
Why should I lose the right is mine?
My date is not to die this day.' "—

Who can doubt, for a moment, that this refers to the battle of Flodden, and to the popular reports concerning the doubtful fate of James IV? Allusion is immediately afterwards made to the death of George Douglas, heir apparent of Angus, who fought and fell with his sovereign:

"The sternes three that day shall die,
That bears the harte in silver sheen."

The well known arms of the Douglas family are the heart and three stars. In another place, the battle of Pinkie is expressly mentioned by name:

"At Pinken Cluch there shall be spilt
Much gentle blood that day;
There shall the bear lose the guilt,
And the eagill bear it away."

To the end of all this allegorical and mystical rhapsody is interpolated, in the later edition by Andro Hart, a new edition of Berlington's verses, before quoted, altered and manufactured so as to bear reference to the accession of James VI, which had just then taken place. The insertion is made, with a peculiar degree of awkwardness, betwixt a question put by the narrator, concerning the name and abode of the person who showed him these strange matters, and the answer of the prophet to that question;

"Then to the Bairne could I say,
Where dwells thou, or in what countrie?
[Or who shall rule the isle of Britane,
From the north to the south sey?
A French queene shall beare the sonne,
Shall rule all Britane to the sea;
Which of the Bruce's blood shall come,
As neere as the nint degree:
I frained fast what was his name,
Where that he came, from what country.]
In Erslingtoun I dwell at hame,
Thomas Rymour men cals me."

There is surely no one, who will not conclude, with lord Hailes, that the eight lines, inclosed in brackets, are a clumsy interpolation, borrowed from Berlington, with such alterations as might render the supposed prophecy applicable to the union of the crowns.

While we are on this subject, it may be proper briefly to notice the scope of some of the other predictions in Hart's collection. As the prophecy of Berlington was intended to raise the spirits of the nation, during the regency of Albany, so those of Sybilla and Eltraine refer to that of the earl of Arran, afterwards duke of Chatelherault, during the minority of Mary, a period of similar calamity. This is obvious from the following verses:

"Take a thousand in calculation,
And the longest of the lyon,
Four eresscents under one crowne,
With saint Andrew's croce thrise,
Then threescore and thrise three:
Take tent to Merling truely,
Then shall the warres ended be,
And never againe rise.
In that yere there shall a king,
A duke, and no crowned king;
Becaus the prince shall be yong,
And tender of yeares."

The date, above hinted at, seems to be 1549, when the Scottish regent, by means of some succours derived from France was endeavouring to repair the consequences of the fatal battle of Pinkie. Allusion is made to the supply given to the "Moldwarte (England) by the fained hart" (the earl of Angus.) The regent is described by his bearing the antelope; large supplies are promised from France, and complete conquest predicted to Scotland and her allies. Thus was the same hackneyed stratagem repeated, whenever the interest of the rulers appeared to stand in need of it. The regent was not, indeed, till after this period, created duke of Chatelherault; but that honour was the object of his hopes and expectations.

The name of our renowned soothsayer is liberally used as an authority, throughout all the prophecies, published by Andro Hart. Besides those expressly put in his name, Gildas, another assumed personage, is supposed to derive his knowledge from him; for he concludes thus:

"True Thomas me told in a troublesome time
In a harvest morn at Eldoun hills."
The Prophecy of Gildas.

In the propheey of Berlington, already quoted, we are told,

"Marvellous Merlin, that many men of tells,
And Thomas's sayings comes all at once."

While I am upon the subject of these propheeies, may I be permitted to call the attention of antiquaries to Merdwynn Wyllt, or *Merlin the Wild*, in whose name, and by no means in that of Ambrose Merlin, the friend of Arthur, the Scottish propheeies are issued. That this personage resided at Drummelzier, and roamed, like a second Nebuchadnezzar, the woods of Tweeddale, in remorse for the death of his nephew, we learn from Fordun. In the *Scotichronicon*, lib. iii, cap. 31, is an account of an interview betwixt St. Kentigern and Merlin, then in this distracted and miserable state. He is said to have been called *Lailoken*, from his mode of life. On being commanded by the saint to give an account of himself, he says, that the penance which he performs was imposed on him by a voice from heaven, during a bloody contest betwixt Lidel and Carwanolow, of which battle he had been the cause. According to his own prediction, he perished at once by wood, earth, and water: for, being pursued with stones by the rustics, he fell from a rock into the river Tweed, and was transfixed by a sharp stake, fixed there for the purpose of extending a fishing net:

Sude perfossus, lapide percussus et unda,
Hæc tria Merlinum fertur inire necem,
Sicque ruit, mersusque fuit lignoque pependit,
Et fecit vatem per terna pericula verum.

But, in a metrical history of Merlin of Caledonia, compiled by Geoffrey of Monmouth, from the traditions of the Welch bards, this mode of death is attributed to a page, whom Merlin's sister, desirous to convict the prophet of falsehood, because he had betrayed her intrigues, introduced to him, under three various disguises, inquiring each time in what manner the person should die. To the first demand Merlin answered, the party should perish by a fall from a rock; to the second, that he should die by a tree; and to the third, that he should be drowned. The youth perished, while hunting, in the mode imputed by Fordun to Merlin himself.

Fordun, contrary to the Welch authorities, confounds this person with the Merlin of Arthur; but concludes by informing us, that many believed him to be a different person. The grave of Merlin is pointed out at Drummelzier, in Tweeddale, beneath an aged thorn-tree. On the east side of the churchyard, the brook, called Pausayl, falls into the Tweed; and the following propheey is said to have been current concerning their union:

When Tweed and Pausayl join at Merlin's grave,
Scotland and England shall one monarch have.

On the day of the coronation of James VI, the Tweed accordingly overflowed, and joined the Pausayl at the prophet's grave.—*Pennycuick's History of Tweeddale*, p. 26. These circumstances would seem to infer a communication betwixt the south-west of Scotland and Wales, of a nature peculiarly intimate; for I presume that Merlin would retain sense enough to choose, for the scene of his wanderings, a country having a language and manners similar to his own.

Be this as it may, the memory of Merlin Sylvester, or the Wild, was fresh among the Scots during the reign of James V. Waldhave,* under whose name a set of propheeies was published, describes himself as lying upon Lomond Law; he hears a voice, which bids him stand to his defence; he looks around, and beholds a flock of hares and foxes† pursued over

* I do not know whether the person here meant be Waldhave, an abbot of Melrose, who died in the odour of sanctity, about 1160.

† The strange occupation, in which Waldhave beholds Merlin engaged, derives some illustration from a curious passage in Geoffrey of Monmouth's life of Merlin, above quoted. The poem, after narrating that the prophet had fled to the forests in a state of distraction, proceeds to mention, that, looking upon the stars one clear evening, he discerned, from his astronomical knowledge, that his wife, Guendolen, had resolved, upon the next morning, to take another husband. As he had presaged to her that this would happen, and had promised her a nuptial gift (cautioning her, however, to keep the bridegroom out of his sight,) he now resolved to make good his word. Accordingly, he collected all the stags and lesser game in his neighbourhood, and, having seated himself on a buck, drove the herd before him to the capital of Cumberland, where Guendolen resided. But her lover's curiosity leading him to inspect too nearly this extraordinary cavalcade, Merlin's rage was awakened, and he slew him, with the stroke of an antler of the stag. The original runs thus:

Dixerat: et silvas et saltus circuit omnes,
Cervorumque greges agmen collegit in unum,
Et damas, capreasque simul, cervoque resedit;
Et veniente die, compellens agmina præ se,
Festinans vadit quo nubit Guendolæna.
Postquam venit eo, patienter cœgit
Cervos ante fores, proclamans, "Guendolæna,
Guendolæna, veni, te talia munera spectant.'
Ocius ergo venit subridens Guendolæna,
Gestarique virum cervo miratur, et illum
Sic parere viro, tantum quoque posse ferarum
Uniri numerum quas præ se solus agebat,
Sicut pastor oves, quas ducere suevit ad herbas;
Stabat ab excelsa sponsus spectansque fenestra
In solio mirans equitem, risumque movebat.
Ast ubi vidit eum vates, animoque quis esset,
Calluit, extemplo divulsit cornua ceryo
Quo gestabatur, vibrataque jecit in illum
Et caput illius penitus contrivit, eumque
Reddidit exanimem, vitamque fugavit in auras;

the mountains by a savage figure, to whom he can hardly give the name of man. At the sight of Waldhave, the apparition leaves the objects of his pursuit and assaults him with a club. Waldhave defends himself with his sword, throws the savage to the earth, and refuses to let him arise, till he swears by the law and lead he lives upon, "to do him no harm." This done, he permits him to arise, and marvels at his strange appearance:

"He was formed like a freike (man) all his four quarters;
And then his chin and his face haired so thick,
With haire growing so grime, fearful to see."

He answers briefly to Waldhave's inquiry concerning his name and nature, that he "drees his weird," *i. e.* does penance, in that wood; and having hinted that questions as to his own state are offensive, he pours forth an obscure rhapsody concerning futurity, and concludes,

"Go musing upon Merling if thou wilt;
For I mean no more man at this time."

This is exactly similar to the meeting betwixt Merlin and Kentigern in Fordun. These prophecies of Merlin seem to have been in request in the minority of James V; for among the amusements with which sir David Lindesay diverted that prince during his infancy, are

"The prophecies of Rymer, Bede, and Merlin."
Sir David Lindsay's Epistle to the King.

And we find, in Waldhave, at least one allusion to the very ancient prophecy, addressed to the countess of Dunbar;

"This is a true token that Thomas of tells,
When a ladde with a ladye shall go over the fields."

The original stands thus:

"When laddes weddeth lovedies."

Another prophecy of Merlin seems to have been current about the time of the regent Morton's execution.—When that nobleman was committed to the charge of his accuser, captain James Stewart, newly created earl of Arran, to be conducted to his trial at Edinburgh, Spottiswoode says that he asked, "'Who was earl of Arran?' and being answered that captain James was the man, after a short pause he said, 'And is it so? I know then what I may look for!' meaning, as was thought, that the old prophecy of the 'falling of the heart* by the mouth of Arran,' should then be fulfilled. Whether this was his mind or not, it is not known; but some spared not, at the time when the Hamiltons were banished, in which business he was held too earnest, to say, that he stood in fear of this prediction, and went that course only to disappoint it. But, if so it was, he did find himself now deluded; for he fell by the mouth of another Arran than he imagined."—*Spottiswoode*, p. 313. The fatal words alluded to seem to be these in the prophecy of Merlin:

"In the mouth of Arrane a selcouth shall fall,
Two bloodie hearts shall be taken with a false traine,
And derfly dung down without any dome."

To return from these desultory remarks, into which the editor has been led by the celebrated name of Merlin, the style of all these prophecies, published by Hart, is very much the same. The measure is alliterative, and somewhat similar to that of *Pierce Plowman's Visions;* a circumstance which might entitle us to ascribe to some of them an earlier date than the reign of James V, did we not know that *sir Galloran of Galloway*, and *Gawaine and Gologras*, two romances rendered almost unintelligible by the extremity of affected alliteration, are perhaps not prior to that period. Indeed, although we may allow, that during much earlier times, prophecies, under the names of those celebrated soothsayers, have been current in Scotland, yet those published by Hart have obviously been so often vamped and re-vamped, to serve the political purposes of different periods, that it may be shrewdly suspected, that, as in the case of sir John Cutler's transmigrated stockings, very little of the original materials now remains. I cannot refrain from indulging my readers with the publisher's title to the last prophecy; as it contains certain curious information concerning the queen of Sheba, who is identified with the Cumæan sybil: —"Here followeth a prophecie, pronounced by a noble queene and matron, called Sybilla, Regina Austri, that came to Solomon. Through the which she compiled four bookes, at the instance and request of the said king Sol, and other divers: and the fourth book was directed to a noble king, called Baldwine, king of the broad isle of Britain; in the which she maketh mention of two noble princes and emperours, the which is called Leones. How these two shall subdue, and overcome all earthlie princes to their diademe and crowne, and also be glorified and crowned in the heaven among saints. The first of these two is Constantinus Magnus; that was Leprosus, the son of saint Helene, that found the croce. The second is the sixt king of the name of Steward of Scotland, the which is our most noble king." With such editors and commentators, what wonder that the text became unintelligible, even beyond the usual oracular obscurity of prediction?

If there still remain, therefore, among these predictions, any verses having a claim to real antiquity, it seems now impossible to discover them from those which are comparatively modern. Nevertheless, as there are to be found, in these compositions, some uncommonly wild and masculine expressions, the editor has been induced to throw a few passages together, into the sort of ballad to which this disquisition is prefixed. It would, indeed, have been no difficult matter for him, by a judicious selection, to have excited, in favour of Thomas of Ercildoun, a share of the admiration bestowed by sundry wise persons upon Mass Robert Fleming. For example:

"But then the lilye shall be loused when they least think;
Then clear king's blood shal quake for fear of death;
For churls shal chop off heads of their chief beirns,
And carfe of the crowns that Christ hath appointed.
— — — — — — — —
Thereafter on every side sorrow shal arise;
The barges of clear barons down shal be sunken;
Seculars shal sit in spiritual seats,
Occupying offices anointed as they were."

Taking the lily for the emblem of France, can there be a more plain prophecy of the murder of her monarch, the destruction of her nobility, and the desolation of her hierarchy?

But, without looking farther into the signs of the times, the editor, though the least of all the prophets, cannot help thinking that every true Briton will approve of his application of the last prophecy quoted in the ballad.

Ocius inde suum, talorum verbere, cervum
Diffugiens egit, silvasque redire paravit."

For a perusal of this curious poem, accurately copied from a MS. in the Cotton library, nearly coeval with the author, I was indebted to my learned friend, the late Mr. Ritson. There is an excellent paraphrase of it in the curious and entertaining *Specimens of Early English Romances*, published by Mr. Ellis.

* The heart was the cognizance of Morton.

Hart's collection of propheeies has been frequently printed within the century, probably to favour the pretensions of the unfortunate family of Stuart. For the prophetie renown of Gildas and Bede, see *Fordun*, lib. 3.

Before leaving the subject of Thomas's predietions, it may be notieed, that sundry rhymes, passing for his propheeie effusions, are still current among the vulgar. Thus, he is said to have prophesied of the very ancient family of Haig of Bemerside,

"Betide, betide, whate'er betide,
Haig shall be Haig of Bemerside."

The grandfather of the present proprietor of Bemerside had twelve daughters, before his lady brought him a male heir. The common people trembled for the credit of their favourite soothsayer. The late Mr. Haig was at length born, and their belief in the propheey confirmed beyond a shadow of doubt.

Another memorable propheey bore, that the old kirk of Kelso, constructed out of the ruins of the abbey, should fall when "at the fullest." At a very crowded sermon, about thirty years ago, a piece of lime fell from the roof of the church. The alarm, for the fulfilment of the words of the seer, became universal; and happy were they who were nearest the door of the predestined edifice. The church was in consequence deserted, and has never since had an opportunity of tumbling upon a full congregation. I hope, for the sake of a beautiful specimen of Saxo-Gothie architecture, that the accomplishment of this propheey is far distant.

Another prediction, ascribed to the Rhymer, seems to have been founded on that sort of insight into futurity, possessed by most men of a sound and combining judgment. It runs thus:

"At Eildon tree if you shall be,
A brigg ower Tweed you there may see."

The spot in question commands an extensive prospect of the course of the river; and it was easy to foresee, that when the country should become in the least degree improved, a bridge would be somewhere thrown over the stream. In fact, you now see no less than three bridges from that elevated situation.

Corspatrick (Comes Patrick,) earl of March, but more commonly taking his title from his castle of Dunbar, acted a noted part during the wars of Edward I in Scotland. As Thomas of Ercildoun is said to have delivered to him his famous propheey of king Alexander's death, the author has chosen to introduce him into the following ballad. All the prophetie verses are selected from Hart's publication.

PART II.

ALTERED FROM ANCIENT PROPHECIES.

When seven years were come and gane,
The sun blinked fair on pool and stream;
And Thomas lay on Huntlie bank,
Like one awakened from a dream.

He heard the trampling of a steed,
He saw the flash of armour flee,
And he beheld a gallant knight,
Come riding down by the Eildon tree.

He was a stalwart knight, and strong;
Of giant make he 'peared to be:
He stirred his horse, as he were wode,
Wi' gilded spurs, of faushion free.

Says—"Well met, well met, true Thomas!
Some uncouth ferlies show to me."
Says—"Christ thee save, Corspatrick brave!
Thrice welcome, good Dunbar, to me!

"Light down, light down, Corspatrick brave,
And I will show thee curses three,
Shall gar fair Scotland greet and grane,
And change the green to the black livery.

"A storm shall roar, this very hour,
From Rosse's hills to Solway sea."
"Ye lied, ye lied, ye warlock hoar!
For the sun shines sweet on fauld and lea."

He put his hand on the earlie's head;
He showed him a rock, beside the sea,
Where a king lay stiff, beneath his steed,*
And steeldight nobles wiped their ee.

"The neist curse lights on Branxton hills;
By Flodden's high and heathery side,
Shall wave a banner red as blude,
And chieftains throng wi' miekle pride.

"A Scottish king shall come full keen;
The ruddy lion beareth he;
A feathered arrow sharp, I ween,
Shall make him wink and warre to see.

"When he is bloody, and all to bledde,
Thus to his men he still shall say—
'For God's sake turn ye back again,
And give yon southern folk a fray!
Why should I lose the right is mine?
My doom is not to die this day.'†

"Yet turn ye to the eastern hand,
And wo and wonder ye sall see;
How forty thousand spearman stand,
Where yon rank river meets the sea.

"There shall the lion lose the gylte,
And the libbards bear it clean away;
At Pinkyn Cleueh there shall be spilt
Much gentil blude that day."

"Enough, enough, of curse and ban;
Some blessing show thou now to me,
Or, by the faith o' my bodie," Corspatrick said,
"Ye shall rue the day ye e'er saw me!"

"The first of blessings I shall thee show,
Is by a burn, that's called of bread;‡
Where Saxon men shall tine the bow,
And find their arrows lack the head.

"Beside that brigg, out-ower that burn,
Where the water biekereth bright and sheen,
Shall many a falling courser spurn,
And knights shall die in battle keen.

"Beside a headless cross of stone,
The libbards there shall lose the gree;
The raven shall come, the erne shall go,
And drink the Saxon blood sae free.
The cross of stone they shall not know,
So thick the corses there shall be."

---

* King Alexander; killed by a fall from his horse, near Kinghorn.

† The uncertainty which long prevailed in Scotland concerning the fate of James IV is well known.

‡ One of Thomas's rhymes, preserved by tradition, runs thus:

"The burn of breid
Shall run fow reid."

Bannock-burn is the brook here meant. The Scots give the name of *bannock* to a thick round cake of unleavened bread.

"But tell me now," said brave Dunbar,
"True Thomas, tell now unto me,
What man shall rule the isle Britain,
Even from the north to the southern sea?"

"A French queen shall bear the son,
Shall rule all Britain to the sea:
He of the Bruce's blood shall come,
As near as in the ninth degree.

"The waters worship shall his race,
Likewise the waves of the farthest sea;
For they shall ride ower ocean wide,
With hempen bridles, and horse of tree."

PART III.

THOMAS THE RHYMER was renowned among his contemporaries, as the author of the celebrated romance of *Sir Tristrem*. Of this once admired poem only one copy is known to exist, which is in the Advocates' Library. The author, in 1804, published a small edition of this curious work, which, if it does not revive the reputation of the bard of Erceldoune, is at least the earliest specimen of Scottish poetry hitherto published. Some account of this romance has already been given to the world in Mr. Ellis's *Specimens of Ancient Poetry*, vol. i, p. 165, iii, p. 410; a work, to which our predecessors and our posterity are alike obliged; the former, for the preservation of the best selected examples of their poetical taste; and the latter, for a history of the English language, which will only cease to be interesting with the existence of our mother-tongue, and all that genius and learning have recorded in it. It is sufficient here to mention, that, so great was the reputation of the romance of *Sir Tristrem*, that few were thought capable of reciting it after the manner of the author;—a circumstance alluded to by Robert de Brune, the annalist:

"I see in song, in sedgeyng tale,
Of Erceldoun, and of Kendale.
Now thame says as they thame wroght,
And in thare saying it semes nocht,
That thou may here in sir Tristrem,
Over gestes it has the steme,
Over all that is or was;
If men it said as made Thomas," &c.

It appears, from a very curious MS. of the thirteenth century, *penes* Mr. Douce of London, containing a French metrical romance of *Sir Tristrem*, that the work of our Thomas the Rhymer was known, and referred to, by the minstrels of Normandy and Bretagne. Having arrived at a part of the romance, where reciters were wont to differ in the mode of telling the story, the French bard expressly cites the authority of the poet of Erceldoune:

"Plusurs de nos granter ne volent,
Co que del naim dire se solent,
Ki femme Kaherdin dut aimer,
Li naim redut Tristram narrer,
E entusché par grant engin,
Quant il afole Kaherdin;
Pur cest plaie e pur cest mal,
Enveiad Tristran Guvernal,
En Engleterre pur Ysolt
Thomas ico granter ne volt,
Et si volt par raisun mostrer,
Qu' ico ne put pas esteer," &c.

The tale of *Sir Tristrem*, as narrated in the Edinburgh MS., is totally different from the voluminous romance in prose, originally compiled on the same subject by Rusticien de Puise, and analysed by M. de Tressan; but agrees in every essential particular with the metrical performance just quoted, which is a work of much higher antiquity.

PART III.—MODERN.

WHEN seven years more had come and gone,
Was war through Scotland spread,
And Ruberslaw showed high Dunyon[1]
His beacon blazing red.

Then all by bonny Coldingknow,[2]
Pitched pallioons took their room,
And crested helms, and spears a rowe,
Glanced gaily through the broom.

The Leader, rolling to the Tweed,
Resounds the ensenzie;*
They roused the deer from Caddenhead,
To distant Torwoodlee.[3]

The feast was spread in Ercildoune,
In Learmont's high and ancient hall;
And there were knights of great renown,
And ladies laced in pall.

Nor lacked they, while they sat at dine,
The music nor the tale,
Nor goblets of the blood-red wine,
Nor mantling quaighs† of ale.

True Thomas rose, with harp in hand,
When as the feast was done;
(In minstrel strife, in Fairy land,
The elfin harp he won.)

Hushed were the throng, both limb and tongue,
And harpers for envy pale;
And armed lords leaned on their swords,
And harkened to the tale.

In numbers high, the witching tale
The prophet poured along;
No after bard might e'er avail‡
Those numbers to prolong.

Yet fragments of the lofty strain
Float down the tide of years,
As, buoyant on the stormy main,
A parted wreck appears.

He sung king Arthur's table round:
The warrior of the lake;
How courteous Gawaine met the wound,[4]
And bled for ladies' sake.

But chief, in gentle Tristrem's praise,
The notes melodious swell;
Was none excelled, in Arthur's days,
The knight of Lionelle.

For Marke, his cowardly uncle's right,
A venomed wound he bore;
When fierce Morholde he slew in fight,
Upon the Irish shore.

No art the poison might withstand;
No medicine could be found,
Till lovely Isolde's lily hand
Had probed the rankling wound.

With gentle hand and soothing tongue,
She bore the leeches part;
And, while she o'er his sick bed hung,
He paid her with his heart.

O fatal was the gift, I ween!
For, doomed in evil tide,
The maid must be rude Cornwall's queen,
His cowardly uncle's bride.

* *Ensenzie*—War-cry, or gathering word.
† *Quaighs*—Wooden cups, composed of staves hooped together.
‡ See introduction to this ballad.

Their loves, their woes, the gifted bard
In fairy tissue wove;
Where lords, and knights, and ladies bright,
In gay confusion strove.

The Garde Joyeuse, amid the tale,
High reared its glittering head;
And Avalon's enchanted vale
In all its wonders spread.

Brengwain was there, and Segramore,
And fiend-born Merlin's gramarye;
Of that famed wizard's mighty lore,
O who could sing but he?

Through many a maze the winning song
In changeful passion led,
Till bent at length the listening throng
O'er Tristrem's dying bed.

His ancient wounds their scars expand;
With agony his heart is wrung;
O where is Isolde's lily hand,
And where her soothing tongue?

She comes, she comes! like flash of flame
Can lovers' footsteps fly:
She comes, she comes! she only came
To see her Tristrem die.

She saw him die: her latest sigh
Joined in a kiss his parting breath:
The gentlest pair, that Britain bare,
United are in death.

There paused the harp; its lingering sound
Died slowly on the ear;
The silent guests still bent around,
For still they seemed to hear.

Then wo broke forth in murmurs weak,
Nor ladies heaved alone the sigh:
But, half ashamed, the rugged cheek
Did many a gauntlet dry.

On Leader's stream, and Learmont's tower,
The mists of evening close:
In camp, in castle, or in bower,
Each warrior sought repose.

Lord Douglas, in his lofty tent,
Dreamed o'er the woful tale;
When footsteps light, across the bent,
The warrior's ears assail.

He starts, he wakes; "What, Richard, ho!
Arise, my page, arise!
What venturous wight, at dead of night,
Dare step where Douglas lies!"

Then forth they rushed: by Leader's tide,
A selcouth* sight they see,
A hart and hind pace side by side,
As white as snow on Fairnalie.[5]

Beneath the moon, with gesture proud,
They stately move and slow;
Nor scare they at the gathering crowd,
Who marvel as they go.

To Learmont's tower a message sped,
As fast as page might run;
And Thomas started from his bed,
And soon his clothes did on.

First he woxe pale, and then he woxe red;
Never a word he spake but three:
"My sand is run; my thread is spun;
This sign regardeth me."

* *Selcouth*—Wonderous.

The elfin harp his neck around,
In minstrel guise, he hung;
And on the wind, in doleful sound,
Its dying accents rung.

Then forth he went; yet turned him oft
To view his ancient hall;
On the gray tower, in lustre soft,
The autumn moonbeams fall.

And Leader's waves, like silver sheen,
Danced shimmering in the ray:
In deepening mass, at distance seen,
Broad Soltra's mountains lay.

"Farewell, my father's ancient tower!
A long farewell," said he:
"The scene of pleasure, pomp, or power,
Thou never more shall be.

"To Learmont's name no foot of earth
Shall here again belong,
And on thy hospitable hearth
The hare shall leave her young.

"Adieu! adieu!" again he cried,
All as he turned him roun':
"Farewell to Leader's silver tide!
Farewell to Ercildoun!"

The hart and hind approached the place,
As lingering yet he stood:
And there, before lord Douglas' face,
With them he crossed the flood.

Lord Douglas leaped on his berry brown steed,
And spurred him the Leader o'er;
But, though he rode with lightning speed,
He never saw them more.

Some said to hill, and some to glen,
Their wonderous course had been;
But ne'er in haunts of living men
Again was Thomas seen.

NOTE TO PART I.

1. —— she pu'd an apple frae a tree, &c.—P. 319.*

The traditional commentary upon this ballad informs us, that the apple was the produce of the fatal tree of knowledge, and that the garden was the terrestrial paradise. The repugnance of Thomas to be debarred the use of falsehood, when he might find it convenient, has a comic effect.

APPENDIX.

The reader is here presented, from an old, and unfortunately an imperfect MS., with the undoubted original of Thomas the Rhymer's intrigue with the queen of Faery. It will afford great amusement to those, who would study the nature of traditional poetry, and the changes effected by oral tradition, to compare this ancient romance with the foregoing ballad. The same incidents are narrated, even the expression is often the same, yet the poems are as different in appearance, as if the older tale had been regularly and systematically modernized by a poet of the present day.

Incipit Prophesia Thome de Erseldoun.

In a lande as I was lent,
In the gryking of the day,
Ay alone as I went,
In Huntle bankys me for to play:
I saw the throstyl, and the jay,
Ye mawes movyde of her song,
Ye wodwale sang notes gay,
That al the wod about range.
In that longyng as I lay,
Undir nethe a derne tre,
I was war of a lady gay,
Come rydyng ouyr a fair le;

Zogh I suld sitt to doomysday,
With my tong to wrabbe and wry,
Certanly all hyr aray,
It beth neuyr diseryuyd for me.
Hyr palfra was dappyll gray,
Syeke on say neuer none,
As the son in somers day,
All abowte that lady shone;
Hyr sadel was of a rewel bone,
A semly sight it was to se,
Bryht with mony a preeyous stone,
And compasyd all with crapste;
Stones of oryens gret plente,
Her hair about her hede it hang,
She rode ouer the farnyle.
A while she blew a while she sang,
Her girths of nobil silke they were,
Her boculs were of beryl stone,
Sadyll and brydill war – – :
With sylk and sendel about bedone,
Hyr patyrel was of a pall fyne,
And hyr croper of the arase,
Hyr brydil was of gold fyne,
On euery syde forsothe hong bells thre,
Hyr brydil reynes – – –
A semly syzt – – – –
Crop and patyrel – – –
In every joynt – – – –
She led thre grew hounds in a leash,
And ratches cowpled by her ran;
She bar an horn about her halse,
And undir her gyrdil meny flene.
Thomas lay and sa – – –
In the bankes of – – –
He sayd yonder is Mary of Might,
That bar the child that died for me,
Certes bot I may speke with that lady bright,
Myd my hert will breke in three;
I sehal me hye with all my might,
Hyr to mete at Eldyn tree.
Thomas rathly up he rase,
And ran ouer mountayn hye,
If it be sothe the story says,
He met her euyn at Eldyn tre.

Thomas knelyd down on his kne
Undir nethe the grenewood spray,
And sayd, Lovely lady, thou rue on me,
Queen of heaven as you well may be;
But I am a lady of another countrie,
If I be pareld most of prise,
I ride after the wild fee,
My ratches rinnen at my devys.
If thou be pareld most of prise,
And rides a lady in strang foly,
Lovely lady, as thou art wise,
Giue you me leue to lig ye by.

Do way, Thomas, that were foly,
I pray ye, Thomas, late me be,
That sin will furdo all my bewtie:
Lovely lady, rewe on me,
And euer more I shall with ye dwell,
Here my trowth I plyght to thee,
Where you beleues in heuyn or hell.
Thomas, and you myght lyge me by,
Undir nethe this grene wode spray,
Thou would tell full hastely,
That thou had layn by a lady gay.
Lady, I mote lyg by the,
Undir nethe the greene wode tre,
For all the gold in ehrystenty,
Suld you neuer be wryede for me.
Man on molde you will me marre,
And yet bot you may haf you will,
Trow you well, Thomas, you cheuyest ye warre;
For all my bewtie wilt you spill.

Down lyghtyd that lady bryzt,
Undir nethe the grene wode spray,
And as ye story sayth full ryzt,
Seuyn tymes by her he lay.
She seyd, man, you lyste thi play,
What berde in bouyr may dele with thee,
That maries me all this long day;
I pray ye, Thomas, lat me be.
Thomas stode up in the stede,
And hehelde the lady gay,
Her heyre hang downe about hyr hede,
The tone was blak, the other gray,
Her eyn semyt onte before was gray,
Her gay clethyng was all away,

That he before had sene in that stede;
Hyr body as blo as ony hede.
Thomas sighede, and sayd, allas,
Me thynke this a dullfull syght,
That thou art fadyd in the face,
Before you shone as son so bryzt.
Take thy leue, Thomas, at son and mone,
At gresse, and at euery tre,
This twelvemonth sall you with me gone,
Medyl erth you sall not se.
Alas, he seyd, full wo is me,
I trow my dedes will werke me care,
Jesu, my sole tak to ye,
Whedir so euyr my body sall fare.
She rode furth with all her myzt,
Undir nethe the derne lee,
It was derke as at midnyzt,
And euyr in water unto the kne;
Through the space of days thre,
He herde hut swowyng of a flode;
Thomas sayd, ful wo is me,
Nowe I spyll for fawte of fode;
To a garden she lede him tyte,
There was fruyte in grete plente,
Peyres and appless ther were rype,
The date and the damese,
The figge and als fylbert tre;
The nyghtyngale bredying in her neste,
The papigaye abeut gan fle,
The throstylcok sang wold hafe no rest.
He pressed to pulle fruyt with his hand
As man for faute that was faynt;
She seyd, Thomas, lat al stand,
Or els the deuyl wil the ataynt.
Sche said, Thomas, I the hyzt,
To lay thi hede upon my kne,
And thou shalt see fayrer sight,
Than euyr sawe man in their kintre.
Sees thou, Thomas, yon fair way,
That lyggs ouyr yone fayr playn?
Yonder is the waye to heuyn for ay,
Whan synful sawles haf derayed their payne.
Sees thou, Thomas, yone secund way,
That lygges lawe undir the ryse?
Streight is the way, sothly to say,
To the joyes of paradyce.
Sees thou, Thomas, yone thyrd way,
That ligges ouyr yone how?
Wide is the way sothly to say,
To the brynyng fyres of hell.
Sees thou, Thomas, yone fayr castells,
That standes ouyr yone fayr hill?
Of town and tower it bereth the belle,
In middel erth is non like theretill.
Whan thou comyst in yon castell gaye
I pray thu curteis man to be;
What so any man to you say,
Soke thu answer non but me.
My lord is servyed at yche messe,
With xxx kniztes feir and fre;
I sall say syttyng on the dese,
I toke thy speche beyonde the le.
Thomas stode as still as stone,
And beheld that ladye gaye;
Than was sche fayr and ryche anone,
And also ryal on hir palfreye.
The grewhoundes had fylde them on the dere,
The ratches coupled, by my fay,
She blewe her horn Thomas to chere,
To the castle she went her way.
The lady into the hall went,
Thomas folowyd at her hand;
Thar kept hyr mony a lady gent,
With curtasy and lawe.
Harp and fedyl both he fande,
The getern and the sawtry,
Lut and rybib ther gon gang,
Thair was al maner of mynstralsy.
The most fertly that Thomas thoght,
When he com emyddes the flore,
Fourty hertes to quarry were broght,
That had ben befor both long and store.
Lymors lay lappyng blode,
And kokes standing with dressyng knife,
And dressyd dere as thai wer wode,
And rewell was thair wonder.
Knyghtes dansyd by two and thre
All that leue long day.
Ladyes that were gret of gre
Sat and sang of rych aray.

Thomas sawe much more in that place,
Than I can deseryve,
Til on a day alas, alas,
My lovelye ladye sayd to me,
Busk ye, Thomas, you must agayn,
Here you may no longer be:
Hy then zerne that you were at hame,
I sal ye bryng to Eldyn tre.
Thomas answerd with heuy cher,
And sayd, lowely ladye, lat ma be,
For I say ye certainly here
Haf I be bot the space of dayes three.
Sothly, Thomas, as I telle ye,
You hath been here thre yeres,
And here you may no longer be;
And I sal tele ye a skele,
To-morrowe of helle ye foule fende
Amang our folke shall chuse his fee:
For you art a larg man and an hende,
Trowe you wele he will chuse thee.
For all the golde that may be,
Sal you not be betrayed for me,
And thairfor sal you hens wend.
She broght him euyn to Eldyn tre,
Under nethe the grene wode spray,
In Huntle bankes was fayr to be,
Ther breddes syng both nyzt and day.
Ferre ouyr montayns gray,
There hathe my facon:
Fare wele, Thomas, I wende my way.

* * * * * * *

[The elfin queen, after restoring Thomas to earth, pours forth a string of prophecies, in which we distinguish references to the events and personages of the Scottish wars of Edward III. The battles of Dupplin and Halidon are mentioned, and also black Agnes, countess of Dunbar. There is a copy of this poem in the museum in the cathedral of Lincoln, another in the collection of Peterborough, but unfortunately they are all in an imperfect state. Mr. Jamieson, in his curious collection of Scottish ballads and songs, has an entire copy of this ancient poem, with all the collations. The *lacunæ* of the former edition have been supplied from his copy.]

NOTES TO PART III.

1. And Ruberslaw showed high Dunyon.—P. 325.

Ruberslaw and Duyon are two high hills above Jedburgh.

2. Then all by bonny Coldingknow.—P. 325.

An ancient tower near Ercildoun, belonging to a family of the name of Home. One of Thomas's prophecies is said to have run thus:

Vengeance, vengeance! when and where?
On the house of Coldingknow, now and ever mair.

The spot is rendered classical by its having given name to the beautiful melody, called the *Broom o' the Cowdenknows.*

3. They roused the deer from Caddenhead,
To distant Torwoodlee.—P. 325.

Torwoodlee and Caddenhead are places in Selkirkshire.

4. How courteous Gawaine met the wound.—P. 325.

See in the *Fabliaux* of Monsier le Grande, elegantly translated by the late Gregory Way, esq., the tale of the *Knight and the Sword.*

5. As white as snow on Fairnalie.—P. 326.

An ancient seat upon the Tweed, in Selkirkshire. In a popular edition of the first part of Thomas the Rhymer, the fairy queen thus addresses him:

Gin ye wad meet wi' me again,
Gang to the bonnie banks of Fairnalie.

Harold the Dauntless:

A POEM.

INTRODUCTION.

There is a mood of mind we all have known,
On drowsy eve, or dark and low'ring day,
When the tired spirits lose their sprightly tone,
And nought can chase the lingering hours away.
Dull on our soul falls fancy's dazzling ray,
And wisdom holds his steadier torch in vain,
Obscured the painting seems, mistuned the lay,
Nor dare we of our listless load complain,
For who for sympathy may seek that cannot tell of pain?

The jolly sportsman knows such drearihood,
When bursts in deluge the autumnal rain,
Clouding that morn which threats the heath-cock's brood;
Of such, in summer's drought, the anglers plain,
Who hope the soft mild southern shower in vain;
But, more than all, the discontented fair,
Whom father stern, and sterner aunt, restrain
From county ball, or race occuring rare,
While all her friends around their vestments gay prepare.

Ennui!—or, as our mothers called thee, Spleen!
To thee we owe full many a rare device;—
Thine is the sheaf of painted cards, I ween,
The rolling billiard ball, the rattling dice,
The turning lathe for framing gimcrack nice,
The amateur's blotched pallet thou may'st claim,
Retort, and air pump, threatening frogs and mice,
(Murders disguised by philosophic name,)
And much of trifling grave, and much of buxom game.

Then of the books, to catch thy drowsy glance
Compiled, what bard the catalogue may quote!
Plays, poems, novels, never read but once;—
But not of such the tale fair Edgeworth wrote,
That bears thy name, and is thine antidote;
And not of such the strain by Thomson sung,
Delicious dreams inspiring by his note,
What time to indolence his harp he strung:
Oh! might my lay be ranked that happier list among!

Each hath his refuge whom thy cares assail.
For me, I love my study-fire to trim,
And con right vacantly some idle tale,
Displaying on the couch each listless limb,
Till on the drowsy page the lights grow dim,
And doubtful slumber half supplies the theme;
While antique shapes of knight and giant grim,
Damsel and dwarf, in long procession gleam,
And the romancer's tale becomes the reader's dream.

'Tis thus my malady I well may bear,
Albeit outstretched, like pope's own Paridel,
Upon the rack of a too-easy chair;
And find, to cheat the time, a powerful spell

In old romaunts of errantry that tell,
Or later legends of the fairy-folk,
Or oriental tale of Afrite fell,
Of genii, talisman, and broad-wing'd roc,
Tho' taste may blush and frown, and sober reason mock.

Oft at such season, too, will rhymes unsought,
Arrange themselves in some romantic lay;
The which, as things unfitting graver thought,
Are burnt or blotted on some wiser day;—
These few survive--and proudly let me say,
Court not the critic's smile, nor dread his frown;
They well may serve to while an hour away,
Nor does the volume ask for more renown,
Than Ennui's yawning smile, what time she drops it down.

Three earls came against him with all their train,
Two hath he taken, and one hath he slain:
Count Witikind left the Humber's rich strand,
And he wasted and warr'd in Northumberland.
But the Saxon king was a sire in age,
Weak in battle, in council sage;
Peace of that heathen leader he sought,
Gifts he gave, and quiet he bought:
And the count took upon him the peaceable style,
Of a vassal and liegeman of Britain's broad isle.

IV.

Time will rust the sharpest sword,
Time will consume the strongest cord;
That which moulders hemp and steel,
Mortal arm and nerve must feel.
Of the Danish band, whom count Witikind led,
Many wax'd aged, and many were dead;
Himself found his armour full weighty to bear,
Wrinkled his brows grew, and hoary his hair;
He lean'd on a staff, when his step went abroad,
And patient his palfrey, when steed he bestrode;
As he grew feebler his wildness ceased,
He made himself peace with prelate and priest,
Made his peace, and, stooping his head,
Patiently listed the counsel they said:
Saint Cuthbert's bishop was holy and grave,
Wise and good was the counsel he gave.

V.

"Thou hast murder'd, robb'd, and spoil'd,
Time it is thy poor soul were assoil'd;

At the castle-gate was young Harold there,
Count Witikind's only offspring and heir.

VIII.

Young Harold was fear'd for his hardihood,
His strength of frame, and his fury of mood;
Rude he was, and wild to behold,
Wore neither collar nor bracelet of gold,
Cap of vair, nor rich array,
Such as should grace that festal day:
His doublet of bull's hide was all unbraced,
Uncovered his head, and his sandal unlaced;
His shaggy black locks on his brow hung low,
And his eyes glanced thro' them a swarthy glow;

Thomas sawe much more in that place,
Than I can descryve,
Til on a day alas, alas,
My lovelye ladye sayd to me,
Busk ye, Thomas, you must agayn,
Here you may no longer be:
Hy then zerne that you were at hame,
I sal ye bryng to Eldyn tre.
Thomas answerd with heuy cher,
And sayd, lowely ladye, lat ma be,
For I say ye certainly here
Haf I be bot the space of dayes three.
Sothly, Thomas, as I telle ye,
You hath been here thre yeres,
And here you may no longer be;
And I sal tele ye a skele,
To-morrowe of helle ye foule fende
Amang our folke shall chuse his fee:
For you art a larg man and an hende,
Trowe you wele he will chuse thee.
For all the golde that may be,
Sal you not be betraved for me.

lection of Scottish ballads and songs, has an entire copy of this ancient poem, with all the collations. The *lacunæ* of the former edition have been supplied from his copy.]

NOTES TO PART III.

1. And Ruberslaw showed high Dunyon.—P. 325.

Ruberslaw and Duyon are two high hills above Jedburgh.

2. Then all by bonny Coldingknow.—P. 325.

An ancient tower near Ercildoun, belonging to a family of the name of Home. One of Thomas's prophecies is said to have run thus:

Vengeance, vengeance! when and where?
On the house of Coldingknow, now and ever mair.

The spot is rendered classical by its having given

Of such, in summer's drought, the anglers plain,
Who hope the soft mild southern shower in vain;
But, more than all, the discontented fair,
Whom father stern, and sterner aunt, restrain
From county ball, or race occuring rare,
While all her friends around their vestments gay prepare.
Ennui!—or, as our mothers called thee, Spleen!
To thee we owe full many a rare device;—
Thine is the sheaf of painted cards, I ween,
The rolling billiard ball, the rattling dice,
The turning lathe for framing gimcrack nice,
The amateur's blotched pallet thou may'st claim,

For me, I love my study-fire to trim,
And con right vacantly some idle tale,
Displaying on the couch each listless limb,
Till on the drowsy page the lights grow dim,
And doubtful slumber half supplies the theme;
While antique shapes of knight and giant grim,
Damsel and dwarf, in long procession gleam,
And the romancer's tale becomes the reader's dream.
'Tis thus my malady I well may bear,
Albeit outstretched, like pope's own Paridel,
Upon the rack of a too-easy chair;
And find, to cheat the time, a powerful spell

In old romaunts of errantry that tell,
Or later legends of the fairy-folk,
Or oriental tale of Afrite fell,
Of genii, talisman, and broad-wing'd roc,
Tho' taste may blush and frown, and sober reason mock.

Oft at such season, too, will rhymes unsought,
Arrange themselves in some romantic lay;
The which, as things unfitting graver thought,
Are burnt or blotted on some wiser day;—
These few survive--and proudly let me say,
Court not the critic's smile, nor dread his frown;
They well may serve to while an hour away,
Nor does the volume ask for more renown,
Than Ennui's yawning smile, what time she drops it down.

HAROLD THE DAUNTLESS.

CANTO I.

I.

List to the valorous deeds that were done
By Harold the Dauntless, count Witikind's son!

Count Witikind came of a regal strain,
And roved with his Norsemen the land and the main.
Wo to the realms which he coasted! for there
Was shedding of blood, and rending of hair,
Rape of maiden, and slaughter of priest,
Gathering of ravens and wolves to the feast:
When he hoisted his standard black,
Before him was battle, behind him wrack,
And he burned the churches, that heathen Dane,
To light his band to their barks again.

II.

On Erin's shores was his outrage known,
The winds of France had his banners blown;
Little was there to plunder, yet still
His pirates had foray'd on Scottish hill:
But upon merry England's coast
More frequent he sail'd, for he won the most.
So wide and so far his ravage they knew,
If a sail but gleam'd white 'gainst the welkin blue,
Trumpet and bugle to arms did call,
Burghers hasten'd to man the wall,
Peasants fled inward his fury to 'scape,
Beacons were lighted on headland and cape,
Bells were toll'd out, and aye as they rung,
Fearful and faintly the gray brothers sung,
"Bless us, St. Mary, from flood and from fire,
From famine and pest, and count Witikind's ire!"

III.

He liked the wealth of fair England so well,
That he sought in her bosom as native to dwell.
He enter'd the Humber in fearful hour,
And disembark'd with his Danish power.
Three earls came against him with all their train,
Two hath he taken, and one hath he slain:
Count Witikind left the Humber's rich strand,
And he wasted and warr'd in Northumberland.
But the Saxon king was a sire in age,
Weak in battle, in council sage;
Peace of that heathen leader he sought,
Gifts he gave, and quiet he bought:
And the count took upon him the peaceable style,
Of a vassal and liegeman of Britain's broad isle.

IV.

Time will rust the sharpest sword,
Time will consume the strongest cord;
That which moulders hemp and steel,
Mortal arm and nerve must feel.
Of the Danish band, whom count Witikind led,
Many wax'd aged, and many were dead;
Himself found his armour full weighty to bear,
Wrinkled his brows grew, and hoary his hair;
He lean'd on a staff, when his step went abroad,
And patient his palfrey, when steed he bestrode;
As he grew feebler his wildness ceased,
He made himself peace with prelate and priest,
Made his peace, and, stooping his head,
Patiently listed the counsel they said:
Saint Cuthbert's bishop was holy and grave,
Wise and good was the counsel he gave.

V.

"Thou hast murder'd, robb'd, and spoil'd,
Time it is thy poor soul were assoil'd;
Priest did'st thou slay, and churches burn,
Time it is now to repentance to turn;
Fiends hast thou worshipp'd, with fiendish rite,
Leave now the darkness, and wend into light:
O! while life and space are given,
Turn thee yet, and think of heaven!"
That stern old heathen his head he raised,
And on the good prelate he steadfastly gazed:
"Give me broad lands on the Wear and the Tyne,
My faith I will leave, and I'll cleave unto thine."

VI.

Broad lands he gave him on Tyne and on Wear,
To be held of the church by bridle and spear;
Part of Monkwearmouth, of Tynedale part,
To better his will, and to soften his heart:
Count Witikind was a joyful man,
Less for the faith than the lands that he wan.
The high church of Durham is dress'd for the day,
The clergy are rank'd in their solemn array;
There came the count, in a bear-skin warm,
Leaning on Hilda, his concubine's arm;
He kneel'd before saint Cuthbert's shrine,
With patience unwonted at rites divine:
He abjured the gods of heathen race,
And he bent his head at the font of grace;
But such was the grisly old proselyte's look,
That the priest who baptized him grew pale and shook:
And the old monks mutter'd beneath their hood,
"Of a stem so stubborn can never spring good!"

VII.

Up then arose that grim convertite,
Homeward he hied him when ended the rite
The prelate in honour will with him ride,
And feast in his castle on Tyne's fair side,
Banners and banderols danced in the wind,
Monks rode before them, and spearmen behind;
Onward they pass'd, till fairly did shine
Pennon and cross on the bosom of Tyne:
And full in front did that fortress lower,
In darksome strength with its buttress and tower:
At the castle-gate was young Harold there,
Count Witikind's only offspring and heir.

VIII.

Young Harold was fear'd for his hardihood,
His strength of frame, and his fury of mood;
Rude he was, and wild to behold,
Wore neither collar nor bracelet of gold,
Cap of vair, nor rich array,
Such as should grace that festal day:
His doublet of bull's hide was all unbraced,
Uncovered his head, and his sandal unlaced;
His shaggy black locks on his brow hung low,
And his eyes glanced thro' them a swarthy glow;

A Danish club in his hand he bore,
The spikes were clotted with recent gore;
At his back a she wolf, and her wolf cubs twain,
In the dangerous chase that morning slain.
Rude was the greeting to his father he made,
None to the bishop—while thus he said:

IX.

"What priest-led hypocrite art thou,
With thy humbled look and thy monkish brow,
Like a shaveling who studies to cheat his vow?
Canst thou be Witikind the Waster known,
Royal Erie's fearless son,
Haughty Gunhilda's haughtier lord,
Who won his bride by the axe and sword:
From the shrine of St. Peter the chalice who tore,
And melted to bracelets for Freya and Thor;
With one blow of his gauntlet who bursted the skull,
Before Odin's stone, of the mountain bull?
Then ye worshipp'd with rites that to war-gods belong,
With the deed of the brave, and the blow of the strong,
And now, in thine age, to dotage sunk,
Wilt thou patter thy crimes to a shaven monk,
Lay down thy mail-shirt for clothing of hair,
Fasting and scourge, like a slave, wilt thou bear?
Or, at best, be admitted in slothful bower
To batten with priest and with paramour?
O! out upon thine endless shame!
Each scald's high harp shall blast thy fame,
And thy son will refuse thee a father's name!"

X.

Ireful wax'd old Witikind's look,
His faultering voice with fury shook;—
"Hear me, Harold, of harden'd heart!
Stubborn and wilful ever thou wert.
Thine outrage insane I command thee to cease,
Fear my wrath and remain at peace:—
Just is the debt of repentance I've paid,
Richly the church has a recompense made,
And the truth of her doctrines I prove with my blade.
But reckoning to none of my actions I owe,
And least to my son such accounting will show.
Why speak I to thee of repentance or truth,
Whone'er from thy childhood knew reason or ruth?
Hence! to the wolf and the bear in her den;
These are thy mates, and not rational men."

XI.

Grimly smiled Harold, and coldly replied,
"We must honour our sires, if we fear when they chide.
For me, I am yet what thy lessons have made,
I was rock'd in a buckler and fed from a blade;
An infant, was taught to clap hands and to shout,
From the roofs of the tower when the flame had broke out;
In the blood of slain foemen my finger to dip,
And tinge with its purple my cheek and my lip.—
'Tis thou know'st not truth, that has barter'd in eld,
For a price, the brave faith that thine ancestors held.
When this wolf"—and the carcass he flung on the plain—
"Shall awake and give food to her nurslings again,
The face of his father will Harold review;
Till then, aged heathen, young christian, adieu!"

XII.

Priest, monk, and prelate stood aghast,
As through the pageant the heathen pass'd.
A cross-bearer out of his saddle he flung,
Laid his hand on the pommel and into it sprung;
Loud was the shriek, and deep the groan,
When the holy sign on the earth was thrown!
The fierce old count unsheathed his brand,
But the calmer prelate stay'd his hand;
"Let him pass free!—Heaven knows its hour—
But he must own repentance's power,
Pray and weep, and penance bear,
Ere he hold land by the Tyne and the Wear."—
Thus in scorn and in wrath from his father is gone
Young Harold the Dauntless, count Witikind's son.

XIII.

High was the feasting in Witikind's hall,
Revell'd priests, soldiers, and pagans, and all;
And e'en the good bishop was fain to endure
The scandal which time and instruction might cure:
It were dangerous, he deem'd, at the first to restrain,
In his wine and his wassail, a half-christen'd Dane.
The mead flow'd around, and the ale was drain'd dry,
Wild was the laughter, the song, and the cry;
With Kyrie Eleison came clamorously in
The war-songs of Danesman, Norweyan, and Finn,
Till man after man the contention gave o'er,
Outstretch'd on the rushes that strew'd the hall floor;
And the tempest within, having ceased its wild rout,
Gave place to the tempest that thunder'd without.

XIV.

Apart from the wassail, in turret alone,
Lay flaxen-hair'd Gunnar, old Ermengarde's son;
In the train of lord Harold the page was the first,
For Harold in childhood had Ermengarde nursed;
And grieved was young Gunnar his master should roam,
Unhoused and unfriended, an exile from home.
He heard the deep thunder, the plashing of rain,
He saw the red lightning through shot-hole and pane;
"And oh!" said the page, "on the shelterless wold
Lord Harold is wandering in darkness and cold!
What though he was stubborn, and wayward, and wild,
He endur'd me because I was Ermengarde's child,
And often from dawn till the set of the sun,
In the chase, by his stirrup, unchidden I run:
I would I were older, and knighthood could bear,
I would soon quit the banks of the Tyne and the Wear;
For my mother's command with her last parting breath,
Bade me follow her nursling in life and to death.

XV.

"It pours and it thunders, it lightens amain,
As if Lok, the destroyer, had burst from his chain!
Accursed by the church, and expell'd by his sire,
Nor christain nor Dane give him shelter or fire,
And this tempest what mortal may houseless endure?
Unaided, unmantled, he dies on the moor!
Whate'er comes of Gunnar he tarries not here."
He leapt from his couch and he grasp'd to his spear,
Sought the hall of the feast. Undisturbed by his tread,
The wassailers slept fast as the sleep of the dead:

"Ungrateful and bestial!" his anger broke forth,
"To forget 'mid your goblets the pride of the North!
And you, ye cowl'd priests, who have plenty in store,
Must give Gunnar for ransom a palfrey and ore."

XVI.

Then heeding full little of ban or of curse,
He has siezed on the prior of Jorvaux's purse:
Saint Meneholt's abbot next morning has miss'd
His mantle, deep furr'd from the cape to the wrist:
The seneschal's keys from his belt he has ta'en,
(Well drench'd on that eve was old Hildebrand's brain.)
To the stable-yard he made his way,
And mounted the bishop's palfrey gay,
Castle and hamlet behind him has cast,
And right on his way to the moorland has pass'd.
Sore snorted the palfrey, unused to face
A weather so wild at so rash a pace;
So long he snorted, so loud he neigh'd,
There answer'd a steed that was bound beside,
And the red flash of lightning show'd there where lay
His master, lord Harold, outstretch'd on the clay.

XVII.

Up he started, and thunder'd out, "Stand!"
And rais'd the club in his deadly hand.
The flaxen-hair'd Gunnar his purpose told,
Show'd the palfrey and proffer'd the gold.
"Back, back, and home, thou simple boy!
Thou can'st not share my grief or joy:
Have I not mark'd thee wail and cry
When thou hast seen a sparrow die?
And can'st thou, as my follower should,
Wade ancle-deep through foeman's blood,
Dare mortal and immortal foe,
The gods above, the fiends below,
And man on earth, more hateful still,
The very fountain head of ill?
Desperate of life, and careless of death,
Lover of bloodshed, and slaughter, and scathe,
Such must thou be with me to roam,
And such thou canst not be---back, and home!"

XVIII.

Young Gunnar shook like an aspen bough,
As he heard the harsh voice and beheld the dark brow,
And half he repented his purpose and vow.
But now to draw back were bootless shame,
And he loved his master, so urged his claim:
"Alas! if my arm and my courage be weak,
Bear with me a while for old Ermengarde's sake;
Nor deem so lightly of Gunnar's faith,
As to fear he would break it for peril of death.
Have I not risk'd it to fetch thee this gold,
This surcoat and mantle to fence thee from cold?
And, did I bear a baser mind,
What lot remains if I stay behind?
The priests' revenge, thy father's wrath,
A dungeon and a shameful death."

XIX.

With gentler look lord Harold eyed
The page, then turn'd his head aside;
And either a tear did his eye lash stain,
Or it caught a drop of the passing rain.
"Art thou an outcast then?" quoth he,
"The meeter page to follow me."
'Twere bootless to tell what climes they sought,
Ventures achieved, and battles fought;
How oft with few, how oft alone,
Fierce Harold's arm the field hath won.
Men swore his eye, that flash'd so red
When each other glance was quench'd with dread,
Bore oft a light of deadly flame
That ne'er from mortal courage came.
Those limbs so strong, that mood so stern,
That loved the couch of heath and fern,
Afar from hamlet, tower, and town,
More than to rest on driven down;
That stubborn frame, that sullen mood,
Men deem'd must come of aught but good;
And they whisper'd, the great master fiend was at one
With Harold the Dauntless, count Witikind's son.

XX.

Years after years had gone and fled,
The good old prelate lies lapp'd in lead;
In the chapel still is shown
His sculptured form on a marble stone,
With staff and ring and scapulaire,
And folded hands in the act of prayer.
Saint Cuthbert's mitre is resting now
On the haughty Saxon, bold Aldingar's brow;
The power of his crozier he loved to extend
O'er whatever would break or whatever would bend:
And now hath he cloth'd him in cope and in pall,
And the chapter of Durham has met at his call.
"And hear ye not, brethren," the proud bishop said,
"That our vassal, the Danish count Witikind's dead?
All his gold and his goods hath he given
To holy church for the love of heaven,
And hath founded a chantry with stipend and dole,
That priests and that beadsmen may pray for his soul;
Harold his son is wandering abroad,
Dreaded by man and abhorr'd by God;
Meet it is not, that such should heir
The lands of the church on the Tyne and the Wear;
And at her pleasure, her hallow'd hands
May now resume these wealthy lands."—

XXI.

Answer'd good Eustace, a canon old,
"Harold is tameless, and furious, and bold;
Ever renown blows a note of fame,
And a note of fear, when she sounds his name:
Much of bloodshed and much of scathe
Have been their lot who have waked his wrath.
Leave him these lands and lordships still,
Heaven in its hour may change his will;
But if reft of gold, and of living bare,
An evil counsellor is despair."—
More had he said, but the prelate frown'd,
And murmur'd his brethren, who sate around,
And with one consent have they giv'n their doom,
That the church should the lands of St. Cuthbert resume.
So will'd the prelate; and canon and dean,
Gave to his judgment their loud amen.

CANTO II.

I.

'Tis merry in greenwood, thus runs the old lay,
In the gladsome month of lively May,
When the wild birds' song on stem and spray
Invites to forest bower;
Then rears the ash his airy crest,
Then shines the birch in silver vest,

And the beech in glistening leaves is dress'd,
And dark between shows the oak's proud breast,
Like a chieftain's frowning tower;
Though a thousand branches join their screen,
Yet the broken sun-beams glance between,
And tip the leaves with lighter green,
With brighter tints the flower;
Dull is the heart that loves not then
The deep recess of the wild-wood glen,
Where roe and red-deer find sheltering den,
When the sun is in his power.

II.

Less merry, perchance, is the fading leaf
That follows so soon on the gather'd sheaf,
When the green-wood loses the name;
Silent is then the forest bound,
Save the red-breast's note, and the rustling sound
Of frost-nipt leaves that are dropping round,
Or the deep-mouth'd cry of the distant hound
That opens on his game;
Yet then, too, I love the forest wide,
Whether the sun in splendour ride,
And gild its many-colour'd side,
Or whether the soft and silvery haze,
In vapoury folds, o'er the landscape strays,
And half involves the woodland maze,
Like an early widow's veil,
Where wimpling tissue from the gaze
The form half hides and half betrays,
Of beauty wan and pale.

III.

Fair Metelill was a woodland maid,
Her father a rover of green-wood shade,
By forest statutes undismay'd,
Who lived by bow and quiver.
Well known was Wulfstane's archery,
By merry Tyne both on moor and lea,
Through wooded Weardale's glens so free,
Well beside Stanhope's wild-wood tree,
And well on Ganlesse river.
Yet free though he trespass'd on woodland game,
More known and more fear'd was the wizard fame
Of Jutta of Rookhope, the outlaw's dame;
Fear'd when she frown'd was her eye of flame,
More fear'd when in wrath she laugh'd;
For then, 'twas said, more fatal true
To its dread aim her spell-glance flew,
Than when from Wulfstane's bended yew
Sprung forth the gray goose shaft.

IV.

Yet had this fierce and dreaded pair,
So heaven decreed, a daughter fair;
None brighter crown'd the bed,
In Britain's bounds, of peer or prince,
Nor hath, perchance, a lovelier since
In this fair isle been bred.
And nought of fraud, or ire, or ill,
Was known to gentle Metelill,
A simple maiden she;
The spells in dimpled smiles that lie,
And a downcast blush, and the darts that fly
With the sidelong glance of a hazel eye,
Were her arms and witchery.
So young, so simple was she yet,
She scarce could childhood's joys forget,
And still she loved, in secret set
Beneath the green-wood tree,
To plait the rushy coronet,
And braid with flowers her locks of jet,
As when in infancy;—
Yet could that heart, so simple, prove
The early dawn of stealing love:
Ah! gentle maid, beware!
The power who, now so mild a guest,
Gives dangerous, yet delicious zest
To the calm pleasures of thy breast,
Will soon, a tyrant o'er the rest,
Let none his empire share.

V.

One morn, in kirtle green array'd,
Deep in the wood the maiden stray'd,
And, where a fountain sprung,
She sat her down, unseen, to thread
The scarlet berry's mimic braid,
And while her beads she strung,
Like the blith lark, whose carol gay
Gives a good morrow to the day,
So lightsomely she sung:

VI.

SONG.

"Lord William was born in gilded bower,
The heir of Wilton's lofty tower;
Yet better loves lord William now
To roam beneath wild Rookhope's brow;
And William has lived where ladies fair
With gauds and jewels deck their hair,
Yet better loves the dew-drops still
That pearl the locks of Metelill.
"The pious palmer loves, I wis,
Saint Cuthbert's hallow'd beads to kiss;
But I, though simple girl I be,
Might have such homage paid to me;
For did lord William see me suit
This necklace of the bramble's fruit,
He fain—but must not have his will,—
Would kiss the beads of Metelill.
"My nurse has told me many a tale,
How vows of love are weak and frail;
My mother says that courtly youth
By rustic maid means seldom sooth.
What should they mean? it cannot be,
That such a warning's meant for me,
For nought—oh! nought of fraud or ill
Can William mean to Metelill!"—

VII.

Sudden she stops—and starts to feel
A weighty hand, a glove of steel,
Upon her shrinking shoulders laid;
Fearful she turn'd, and saw, dismay'd,
A knight in plate and mail array'd,
His crest and bearing worn and fray'd,
His surcoat soil'd and riven;
Form'd like that giant race of yore,
Whose long-continued crimes outwore
The sufferance of heaven.
Stern accents made his pleasure known,
Though then he used his gentlest tone:
"Maiden," he said, "sing forth thy glee;
Start not—sing on—it pleases me."

VIII.

Secured within his powerful hold,
To bend her knee, her hands to fold,
Was all the maiden might;
And "Oh! forgive," she faintly said,
"The terrors of a simple maid,
If thou art mortal wight!
But if—of such strange tales are told,—
Unearthly warrior of the wold,
Thou com'st to chide mine accents bold,
My mother, Jutta, knows the spell,
At noon and midnight pleasing well,

The disembodied ear;
Oh! let her powerful charms atone
For aught my rashness may have done,
And cease thy grasp of fear."
Then laughed the knight—his laughter's sound
Half in the hollow helmet drown'd;
His barred visor then he raised,
And steady on the maiden gazed.
He smooth'd his brows, as best he might,
To the dread calm of autumn night,
When sinks the tempest's roar;
Yet still the cautious fishers eye
The clouds, and fear the gloomy sky,
And haul their barks on shore.

IX.

" Damsel," he said, " be wise, and learn
Matters of weight and deep concern:
From distant realms I come,
And, wanderer long, at length have planned
In this my native northern land
To seek myself a home.
Nor that alone—a mate I seek;
She must be gentle, soft, and meek,—
No lordly dame for me:
Myself am something rough of mood,
And feel the fire of royal blood,
And therefore do not hold it good
To match in my degree:
Then, since coy maidens say my face
Is harsh, my form devoid of grace,
For a fair lineage to provide,
'Tis meet that my selected bride
In lineaments be fair;
I love thine well—till now I ne'er
Look'd patient on a face of fear,
But now that tremulous sob and tear
Become thy beauty rare.
One kiss—nay, damsel, coy it not;
And now, go seek thy parents' cot,
And say, a bridegroom soon I come,
To woo my love and bear her home."

X.

Home sprung the maid without a pause
As levret 'scaped from greyhound's jaws;
But still she lock'd, howe'er distress'd,
The secret in her boding breast;
Dreading her sire, who oft forbade
Her steps should stray to distant glade.
Night came—to her accustom'd nook
Her distaff aged Jutta took,
And, by the lamp's imperfect glow,
Rough Wulfstane trimm'd his shafts and bow.
Sudden and clamorous, from the ground
Upstarted slumbering brach and hound;
Loud knocking next the lodge alarms,
And Wulfstane snatches at his arms,
When open flew the yielding door,
And that grim warrior press'd the floor.

XI.

" All peace be here—What! none replies?
Dismiss your fears and your surprise.
'Tis I—that maid hath told my tale,
Or, trembler, did thy courage fail?
It reeks not—it is I demand
Fair Metelill in marriage band;
Harold the Dauntless I, whose name
Is brave men's boast and caitiff's shame."
The parents sought each other's eyes,
With awe, resentment, and surprise:
Wulfstane, to quarrel prompt, began
The stranger's size and thewes to scan;
But, as he scann'd, his courage sunk,
And from unequal strife he shrunk.
Then forth, to blight and blemish, flies
The harmful curse from Jutta's eyes;
Yet fatal howsoe'er the spell
On Harold innocently fell!
And disappointment and amaze
Were in the witch's wilder'd gaze.

XII.

But soon the wit of woman woke,
And to the warrior mild she spoke:
" Her child was all too young."—" A toy,
The refuge of a maiden coy."
Again, " A powerful baron's heir
Claims in her heart an interest fair."
" A trifle—whisper in his ear
That Harold is a suitor here!"
Baffled at length, she sought delay:
" Would not the knight till morning stay?
Late was the hour—he there might rest,
Till morn, their lodge's honoured guest."
Such were her words—her craft might cast,
Her honour'd guest should sleep his last:
" No, not to night—but soon," he swore,
" He would return, nor leave them more."
The threshold then his huge stride crost,
And soon he was in darkness lost.

XIII.

Appall'd awhile the parents stood,
Then changed their fear to angry mood,
And foremost fell their words of ill
On unresisting Metelill:
Was she not cautioned and forbid,
Forewarn'd, implored, accused, and chid,
And must she still to greenwood roam,
To marshal such misfortune home?
" Hence, minion—to thy chamber hence,
There prudence learn and penitence."
She went—her lonely couch to steep
In tears which absent lovers weep;
Or if she gain'd a troubled sleep,
Fierce Harold's suit was still the theme
And terror of her feverish dream.

XIV.

Scarce was she gone, her dame and sire
Upon each other bent their ire:
" A woodsman thou, and hast a spear,
And couldst thou such an insult bear?"
Sullen he said, " A man contends
With men—a witch with sprites and fiends;
Not to mere mortal wight belong
Yon gloomy brow and frame so strong:
But thou—is this thy promise fair,
That your lord William, wealthy heir
To Ulrick, baron of Witton-le-wear,
Should Metelill to altar bear?
Do all the spell's thou boast'st as thine
Serve but to slay some peasant's kine,
His grain in autumn's storms to steep,
Or thorough fog and fen to sweep,
And hag-ride some poor rustic's sleep?
Is such mean mischief worth the fame
Of sorceress and witch's name?
Fame, which with all men's wish conspires,
With thy deserts and my desires,
To damn thy corpse to penal fires?
Out on thee, witch! aroint! aroint!
What now shall put thy schemes in joint?
What save this trusty arrow's point,
From the dark dingle when it flies,
And he who meets it gasps and dies."

XV.

Stern she replied, "I will not wage
War with thy folly or thy rage:
But ere the morrow's sun be low,
Wulfstane of Rookhope, thou shalt know,
If I can venge me on a foe.
Believe the while, that whatsoe'er
I spoke, in ire, of bow and spear,
It is not Harold's destiny
The death of pilfer'd deer to die.
But he, and thou, and you pale moon,
That shall be yet more pallid soon,
Before she sink behind the dell,
Thou, she, and Harold too, shall tell
What Jutta knows of charm or spell."
Thus muttering, to the door she bent
Her wayward steps, and forth she went,
And left alone the moody sire,
To cherish or to slake his ire.

XVI.

Far faster than belonged to age,
Has Jutta made her pilgrimage.
A priest has met her as she pass'd,
And cross'd himself and stood aghast:
She traced a hamlet—not a cur
His throat would ope, his foot would stir;
By crouch, by trembling, and by groan,
They made her hated presence known!
But when she trode the sable fell,
Were wilder sounds her way to tell,—
For far was heard the fox's yell,
The black-cock waked and faintly crew,
Scream'd o'er the moss the scared curlew;
Where o'er the cataract the oak
Lay slant, was heard the raven's croak;
The mountain-cat, which sought his prey,
Glared, scream'd, and started from her way.
Such music cheer'd her journey lone
To the deep dell and rocking stone:
There, with unhallow'd hymn of praise,
She call'd a god of heathen days.

XVII.

INVOCATION.

From thy Pomeranian throne,
Hewn in rock of living stone,
Where, to thy godhead faithful yet,
Bend Esthonian, Finn, and Lett,
And their swords in vengeance whet,
That shall make thine altars wet—
Wet and red for ages more
With the christians' hated gore,—
Hear me! sovereign of the rock,
Hear me! mighty Zernebock.

Mightiest of the mighty known,
Here thy wonders have been shown:
Hundred tribes in various tongue
Oft have here thy praises sung;
Down that stone with runic seam'd,
Hundred victims' blood hath stream'd!
Now one woman comes alone,
And but wets it with her own,
The last, the feeblest of thy flock;—
Hear—and be present, Zernebock!

Hark! he comes; the night-blast cold
Wilder sweeps along the wold;
The cloudless moon grows dark and dim,
And bristling hair and quaking limb
Proclaim the master demon nigh,—
Those who view his form shall die!
Lo! I stoop and veil my head.
Thou who rid'st the tempest dread,
Shaking hill and rending oak—
Spare me! spare me! Zernebock.

He comes not yet! Shall cold delay
Thy votaress at her need repay:
Thou—shall I call thee god or fiend?—
Let others on thy mood attend
With prayer and ritual—Jutta's arms
Are necromantic words and charms;
Mine is the spell, that utter'd once,
Shall wake thy master from his trance,
Shake his red mansion-house of pain,
And burst his seven-times twisted chain.
So! com'st thou ere the spell is spoke?
I own thy presence, Zernebock.

XVIII.

"Daughter of dust," the deep voice said,
—Shook while it spoke the vale for dread;
Rock'd on the base that massive stone,
The evil deity to own,—
"Daughter of dust! not mine the power
Thou seek'st on Harold's fatal hour.
'Twixt heaven and hell there is a strife
Waged for his soul and for his life,
And fain would we the combat win,
And snatch him in his hour of sin.
There is a star now rising red,
That threats him with an influence dread:
Woman, thine arts of malice whet,
To use the space before it set.
Involve him with the church in strife,
Push on adventurous chance his life;
Ourself will in the hour of need,
As best we may, thy counsels speed."
So ceased the voice; for seven leagues round
Each hamlet started at the sound;
But slept again, as slowly died
Its thunders on the hill's brown side.

XIX.

"And is this all," said Jutta stern,
"That thou canst teach and I can learn?
Hence! to the land of fog and waste!
There fittest is thine influence placed,
Thou powerless sluggish deity!
But ne'er shall Briton bend the knee
Again before so poor a god."
She struck the altar with her rod;
Slight was the touch, as when at need
A damsel stirs her tardy steed;
But to the blow the stone gave place,
And, starting from its balanced base,
Roll'd thundering down the moon-light dell,—
Re-echoed moorland, rock, and fell;
Into the moon-light tarn it dash'd,
Their shores the sounding surges lash'd,
And there was ripple, rage, and foam;
But on that lake, so dark and lone,
Placid and pale the moonbeam shone,
As Jutta hied her home.

CANTO III.

I.

Gray towers of Durham! there was once a time
I view'd your battlements with such vague hope,
As brightens life in its first dawning prime;
Not that e'en then came within fancy's scope
A vision vain of mitre, throne, or cope;
Yet, gazing on the venerable hall,
Her flattering dreams would in perspective ope

Some reverend room, some prebendary's stall,
And thus hope me deceived as she deceiveth all.

Well yet I love thy mix'd and massive piles,
Half church of God, half castle 'gainst the Scot,
And long to roam these venerable aisles,
With records stored of deeds long since forgot:
There might I share my Surtees' happier lot,
Who leaves at will his patrimonial field
To ransack every crypt and hallow'd spot,
And from oblivion rend the spoils they yield,
Restoring priestly chant, and clang of knightly shield.

Vain is the wish—since other cares demand
Each vacant hour, and in another clime;
But still that northern harp invites my hand,
Which tells the wonder of thine earlier time;
And fain its numbers would I now command,
To paint the beauties of thy dawning fair,
When Harold, gazing from its lofty stand
Upon the western heights of Beaurepaire,
Saw Saxon Eadmer's towers begirt by winding Wear.

II.

Fair on the half-seen stream the sunbeams danced,
Betraying it beneath the woodland bank,
And fair between the Gothic turrets glanced
Broad lights, and shadows fell on front and flank,
Where tower and buttress rose in martial rank,
And girdled in the massive donjon keep,
And from their circuit peal'd o'er bush and bank
The matin bell with summons long and deep,
And echo answer'd still with long-resounding sweep.

III.

The morning mists rose from the ground,
Each merry bird awaken'd round
As if in revelry;
Afar the bugles' clanging sound
Call'd to the chase the lagging hound;
The gale breathed soft and free,
And seem'd to linger on its way,
To catch fresh odours from the spray,
And waved it in its wanton play
So light and gamesomely.
The scenes which morning beams reveal,
Its sounds to hear, its gales to feel
In all their fragrance round him steal,
It melted Harold's heart of steel,
And, hardly wotting why,
He doff'd his helmet's gloomy pride,
And hung it on a tree beside,
Laid mace and falchion by,
And on the green sward sate him down,
And from his dark habitual frown
Relax'd his rugged brow—
Whoever hath the doubtful task
From that stern Dane a boon to ask
Were wise to ask it now

IV.

His place beside young Gunnar took,
And mark'd his master's softening look,
And in his eye's dark mirror spied
The gloom of stormy thought subside,
And cautious watch'd the fittest tide
To speak a warning word.
So when the torrent's billows shrink,
The timid pilgrim on the brink
Waits long to see them wave and sink,
Ere he dare brave the ford;
And often, after doubtful pause,
His step advances or withdraws:
Fearful to move the slumbering ire
Of his stern lord, thus stood the squire,
Till Harold raised his eye,
That glanced as when athwart the shroud
Of the dispersing tempest-cloud
The bursting sunbeams fly.

V.

"Arouse thee, son of Ermengarde,
Offspring of prophetess and bard!
Take harp, and greet this lovely prime
With some high strain of runic rhyme,
Strong, deep, and powerful! Peal it round
Like that loud bell's sonorous sound,
Yet wild by fits, as when the lay
Of bird and bugle hail the day.
Such was my grandsire, Erick's sport,
When dawn gleam'd on his martial court.
Heymar the scald, with harp's high sound,
Summon'd the chiefs who slept around;
Couch'd on the spoils of wolf and bear,
They roused like lions from their lair,
Then rush'd in emulation forth
To enhance the glories of the north.—
Proud Erick, mightiest of thy race,
Where is thy shadowy resting place?
In wild Valhalla hast thou quaff'd
From foeman's skull metheglin draught,
Or wander'st where thy cairn was piled,
To frown o'er oceans wide and wild?
Or have the milder christians given
Thy refuge in their peaceful heaven?
Where'er thou art, to thee are known
Our toils endured, our trophies won,
Our wars, our wanderings, and our woes."—
He ceased, and Gunnar's song arose.

VI.

SONG.

"Hawk and osprey scream'd for joy,
O'er the beetling cliffs of Hoy,
Crimson foam the beach o'erspread,
The heath was dyed with darker red,
When o'er Erick, Inguar's son,
Dane and Northman piled the stone;
Singing wild the war-song stern,
Rest thee, Dweller of the Cairn!

"Where eddying currents foam and boil
By Bersa's burgh and Græmsay's isle,
The seaman sees a martial form
Half mingled with the mist and storm.
In anxious awe he bears away
To moor his bark in Stromna's bay,
And murmurs from the bounding stern,
'Rest thee, Dweller of the Cairn!'

"What cares disturb the mighty dead?
Each honoured rite was duly paid;
No daring hand thy helm unlaced,
Thy sword, thy shield, were near thee placed,
Thy flinty couch no tear profaned,
Without, with hostile blood 'twas stained;
Within, 'twas lined with moss and fern,
Then rest thee, Dweller of the Cairn!

"He may not rest; from realms afar
Comes voice of battle and of war,
Of conquest wrought with bloody hand
On Carmel's cliffs and Jordan's strand,
When Odin's warlike son could daunt
The turban'd race of Termagaunt——"

VII.

"Peace," said the knight, "the noble scald
Our warlike fathers' deeds recall'd,

But never strove to sooth the son
With tales of what himself had done.
At Odin's board the bard sits high
Whose harp ne'er stoop'd to flattery;
But highest he whose daring lay
Hath dared unwelcome truths to say."
With doubtful smile young Gunnar eyed
His master's looks, and nought replied—
But well that smile his master led
To construe what he left unsaid.
"Is it to me, thou timid youth,
Thou fear'st to speak unwelcome truth?
My soul no more thy censure grieves
Than frosts rob laurels of their leaves.
Say on—and yet—beware the rude
And wild distemper of my blood;
Loth were I that mine ire should wrong
The youth that bore my shield so long,
And who, in service constant still,
Though weak in frame, art strong in will."
"Oh!" quoth the page, "even there depends
My counsel—there my warning tends.
Oft seems as of my master's breast
Some demon were the sudden guest;
Then at the first misconstrued word
His hand is on the mace and sword,
From her firm seat his wisdom driven,
His life to countless dangers given.
O! would that Gunnar could suffice
To be the fiend's last sacrifice,
So that, when glutted with my gore,
He fled and tempted thee no more!"

VIII.

Then waved his hand, and shook his head,
The impatient Dane, while thus he said:
"Profane not, youth—it is not thine
To judge the spirit of our line,
The bold Berserkar's rage divine,
Through whose inspiring, deeds are wrought
Past human strength and human thought.
When full upon his gloomy soul
The champion feels the influence roll,
He swims the lake, he leaps the wall—
Heeds not the depth, nor plumbs the fall—
Unshielded, mail-less, on he goes
Singly against a host of foes;
Their spears he holds like wither'd reeds,
Their mail like maiden's silken weeds;
One 'gainst a hundred will he strive,
Take countless wounds, and yet survive.
Then rush the eagles to his cry
Of slaughter and of victory,
And blood he quaffs like Odin's bowl,
Deep drinks his sword,—deep drinks his soul;
And all that meet him in his ire
He gives to ruin, rout, and fire,
Then, like gorged lion, seeks some den,
And couches till he's man agen.—
Thou know'st the signs of look and limb,
When 'gins that rage to over-brim.
Thou know'st when I am mov'd, and why;
And when thou seest me roll mine eye,
Set my teeth thus, and stamp my foot,
Regard thy safety, and be mute;
But else, speak boldly out whate'er
Is fitting that a knight should hear.
I love thee, youth. Thy lay has power
Upon my dark and sullen hour;
So, christian monks are wont to say,
Demons of old were charm'd away:
Then fear not I will rashly deem
Ill of thy speech, whate'er the theme."

IX.

As down some strait in doubt and dread
The watchful pilot drops the lead,
And, cautious in the midst to steer,
The shoaling channel sounds with fear;
So, lest on dangerous ground he swerved,
The page his master's brow observed,
Pausing at intervals to fling
His hand on the melodious string,
And to his moody breast apply
The soothing charm of harmony,
While hinted half, and half exprest,
This warning song conveyed the rest:

1.

"Ill fares the bark with tackle riven,
And ill when on the breakers driven,
Ill when the storm-sprite shrieks in air,
And the scared mermaid tears her hair;
But worse when on her helm the hand
Of some false traitor holds command.

2.

"Ill fares the fainting palmer, placed
'Mid Hebron's rocks or Rama's waste,
Ill when the scorching sun is high,
And the expected font is dry,
Worse when his guide o'er sand and heath,
The barbarous Copt, has plann'd his death.

3.

"Ill fares the knight with buckler cleft,
And ill when of his helm bereft,
Ill when his steed to earth is flung,
Or from his grasp his falchion wrung;
But worse, if instant ruin token,
When he lists rede by woman spoken."

X.

"How now, fond boy?—Canst thou think ill,"
Said Harold, "of fair Metelill?"
"She may be fair," the page replied,
As through the strings he rang'd,
"She may be fair; but yet,"—he cried,
And then the strain he changed.

1.

"She may be fair," he sang, "but yet
Far fairer have I seen
Than she, for all her locks of jet,
And eyes so dark and sheen.
Were I a Danish knight in arms,
As one day I may be,
My heart should own no foreign charms,
A Danish maid for me.

2.

"I love my father's northern land,
Where the dark pine trees grow,
And the bold Baltic's echoing strand
Looks o'er each grassy oe.*
I love to mark the lingering sun,
From Denmark loth to go,
And leaving on the billows bright,
To cheer the short-lived summer night,
A path of ruddy glow.

3.

"But most the northern maid I love,
With breast like Denmark's snow,
And form as fair as Denmark's pine,
Who loves with purple heath to twine
Her locks of sunny glow;
And sweetly blends that shade of gold
With the cheek's rosy hue,
And faith might for her mirror hold
That eye of matchless blue.

* *Oe*, island.

4.

"'Tis hers the manly sports to love
That southern maidens fear,
To bend the bow by stream and grove,
And lift the hunter's spear.
She can her chosen champion's fight
With eye undazzled see,
Clasp him victorious from the strife,
Or on his corpse yield up her life,—
A Danish maid for me!"

Then smiled the Dane—"thou canst so well
The virtues of our maidens tell,
Half could I wish my choice had been
Blue eyes, and hair of golden sheen,
And lofty soul,—yet what of ill
Hast thou to charge on Metelill?"
"On herself nought," young Gunnar said,
"But her base sire's ignoble trade.
Her mother, too—the general fame
Hath given to Jutta evil name,
And in her gray eye is a flame
Art cannot hide, nor fear can tame.
That sordid woodman's peasant cot
Twice have thine honour'd footsteps sought,
And twice return'd with such ill rede
As sent thee on some desperate deed."

XI.

"Thou errest; Jutta wisely said,
He that comes suitor to a maid,
Ere link'd in marriage, should provide
Lands and a dwelling for his bride—
My father's by the Tyne and Wear
I have reclaim'd."—"O, all too dear,
And all too dangerous the prize,
E'en were it won,"—young Gunnar cries.
"And then this Jutta's fresh device,
That thou shouldst seek, a heathen Dane,
From Durham's priests a boon to gain,
When thou hast left their vassals slain
In their own halls!"—Flash'd Harold's eye—
Thunder'd his voice,—"False page, you lie!
The castle, hall, and tower, is mine,
Built by old Witikind on Tyne.
The wild-cat will defend his den,
Fights for her nest the timid wren;
And think'st thou I'll forego my right
For dread of monk or monkish knight?—
Up and away, that deepening bell
Doth of the bishop's conclave tell.
Thither will I, in manner due,
As Jutta bade, my claim to sue;
And, if to right me they are loth,
Then wo to church and chapter both!"

Now shift the scene and let the curtain fall,
And our next entry be saint Cuthbert's hall.

CANTO IV.

I.

Full many a bard hath sung the solemn gloom,
Of the long Gothic aisle and stone-ribb'd roof,
O'er canopying shrine, and gorgeous tomb,
Carved screen, and altar glimmering far aloof,
And bending with the shade—a matchless proof
Of high devotion, which hath now wax'd cold;
Yet legends say, that luxury's brute hoof
Intruded oft within such sacred fold,
Like step of Bel's false priest, track'd in his fane of old.

Well pleas'd am I, howe'er, that when the route
Of our rude neighbours whilome deign'd to come,
Uncall'd, and eke unwelcome, to sweep out
And cleanse our chancel from the rage of Rome,
They spoke not on our ancient fane the doom
To which their bigot zeal gave o'er their own,
But spared the martyr'd saint and storied tomb,
Though papal miracles had graced the stone,
And though the aisles still loved the organ's swelling tone.

And deem not, though 'tis now my part to paint
A prelate sway'd by love of power and gold,
That all who wore the mitre of our saint
Like to ambitious Aldingar I hold;
Since both in modern times and days of old
It sate on those whose virtues might atone
Their predecessors' frailties trebly told:
Matthew and Morton we as such may own—
And such (if fame speak truth) the honoured Barrington.

II.

But now to earlier and to ruder times,
As subject meet, I tune my rugged rhymes,
Telling how fairly the chapter was met,
And rood and books in seemly order set;
Huge brass-clasp'd volumes, which the hand
Of studious priest but rarely scann'd,
Now on fair carved desk display'd,
'Twas theirs the solemn scene to aid.
O'erhead with many a scutcheon graced,
And quaint devices interlaced,
A labyrinth of crossing rows,
The roof in lessening arches shows;
Beneath its shade, placed proud and high,
With footstool and with canopy,
Sate Aldingar, and prelate ne'er
More haughty graced saint Cuthbert's chair.
Canons and deacons were placed below,
In due degree and lengthen'd row.
Unmoved and silent each sate there,
Like image, in his oaken chair;
Nor head, nor hand, nor foot, they stirr'd,
Nor lock of hair, nor tress of beard,
And of their eyes severe alone
The twinkle show'd they were not stone.

III.

The prelate was to speech address'd,
Each head sunk reverend on each breast:
But ere his voice was heard—without
Arose a wild tumultuous shout,
Offspring of wonder mix'd with fear,
Such as in crowded streets we hear,
Hailing the flames, that, bursting out,
Attract yet scarce the rabble rout.
Ere it had ceas'd a giant hand
Shook oaken door and iron band,
Till oak and iron both gave way,
Clash'd the long bolts, the hinges bray,
And ere upon angel or saint they can call,
Stands Harold the Dauntless in midst of the hall.

IV.

"Now save ye, my masters, both rocket and rood,
From bishop with mitre to deacon with hood!
For here stands count Harold, old Witikind's son,
Come to sue for the lands which his ancestors won."
The prelate look'd round him with sore troubled eye,
Unwilling to grant, yet afraid to deny,
While each canon and deacon who heard the Dane speak,
To be safely at home would have fasted a week:—

Then Aldingar roused him and answer'd again:
"Thou suest for a boon which thou canst not obtain;
The church hath no fiefs for an unchristen'd Dane.
Thy father was wise, and his treasure hath given,
That the priests of a chantry might hymn him to heaven:
And the fiefs which whilome he possess'd as his due,
Have lapsed to the church, and been granted anew
To Anthony Conyers and Alberic Vere,
For the service saint Cuthbert's bless'd banner to bear,
When the bands of the north come to foray the Wear.
Then disturb not our conclave with wrangling or blame,
But in peace and in patience pass hence as ye came."

V.

Loud laughed the stern pagan—"They're free from the care
Of fief and of service, both Conyers and Vere,
Six feet of your chancel is all they will need,
A buckler of stone and a corselet of lead.
Ho, Gunnar!—the tokens!"—and, sever'd anew,
A head and a hand on the altar he threw.
Then shudder'd with terror both canon and monk,
They knew the glazed eye and the countenance shrunk,
And of Anthony Conyers the half-grizzled hair,
And the scar on the hand of sir Alberic Vere.
There was not a churchman or priest that was there,
But grew pale at the sight, and betook him to prayer.

VI.

Count Harold laugh'd at their looks of fear:
"Was this the hand should your banner bear?
Was that the head should wear the casque
In battle at the church's task?
Was it to such you gave the place
Of Harold with the heavy mace?
Find me between the Wear and Tyne
A knight will wield this club of mine.
Give him my fiefs, and I will say
There's wit beneath the cowl of gray."
He raised it, rough with many a stain,
Caught from crush'd scull and spouting brain;
He wheel'd it that it shrilly sung,
And the aisles echoed as it swung,
Then dash'd it down with sheer descent,
And split king Osric's monument.
"How like ye this music? How trow ye the hand
That can wield such a mace may be reft of its land?
No answer?—I spare ye a space to agree,
And saint Cuthbert inspire you, a saint if he be.
Ten strides through your chancel, ten strokes on your bell,
And again I am with you—grave fathers, farewell."

VII.

He turn'd from their presence, he clash'd the oak door,
And the clang of his stride died away on the floor;
And his head from his bosom the prelate uprears
With a ghost-seer's look when the ghost disappears.
"Ye priests of saint Cuthbert, now give me your rede,
For never of counsel had bishop more need!
Were the arch-fiend incarnate in flesh and in bone,
The language, the look, and the laugh were his own.
In the bounds of saint Cuthbert there is not a knight
Dare confront in our quarrel yon goblin in fight.
Then rede me aright to his claim to reply,
'Tis unlawful to grant, and 'tis death to deny."

VIII.

On ven'son and malmsie that morning had fed
The cellarer Vinsauf, 'twas thus that he said:
"Delay till to-morrow the chapter's reply;
Let the feast be spread fair, and the wine be pour'd high:
If he's mortal he drinks,—if he drinks, he is ours—
His bracelets of iron,—his bed in our towers."
This man had a laughing eye,
Trust not, friends, when such you spy;
A beaker's depth he well could drain,
Revel, sport, and jest amain—
The haunch of the deer and the grape's bright dye
Never bard loved them better than I;
But sooner than Vinsauf filled me my wine,
Pass'd me his jest, and laughed at mine,
Though the buck were of Bearpark, of Bordeaux the wine,
With the dullest hermit I'd rather dine
On an oaten cake and a draught of the Tyne.

IX.

Walwayn the leech spoke next—he knew
Each plant that loves the sun and dew,
But special those whose juice can gain
Dominion o'er the blood and brain;
The peasant who saw him by pale moonbeam
Gathering such herbs by bank and stream,
Deem'd his thin form and soundless tread
Were those of wanderer from the dead.
"Vinsauf, thy wine," he said, "hath power,
Our gyves are heavy, strong our tower;
Yet three drops from this flask of mine,
More strong than dungeons, gyves, or wine,
Shall give him prison under ground
More dark, more narrow, more profound.
Short rede, good rede, let Harold have—
A dog's death and a heathen's grave."
I have lain on a sick man's bed,
Watching for hours for the leech's tread,
As if I deem'd that his presence alone
Were of power to bid my pain begone;
I have listed his words of comfort given,
As if to oracles from heaven;
I have counted his steps from my chamber door,
And bless'd them when they were heard no more;
But sooner than Walwayn my sick couch should nigh,
My choice were by leech-craft unaided to die.

X.

"Such service done in fervent zeal
The church may pardon and conceal,"
The doubtful prelate said, "but ne'er
The counsel ere the act should hear.
Anselm of Jarrow, advise us now,
The stamp of wisdom is on thy brow;
Thy days, thy nights in cloister pent,
Are still to mystic learning lent;
Anslem of Jarrow, in thee is my hope,
Thou well canst give counsel to prelate or pope."

XI.

Answer'd the prior—"'Tis wisdom's use
Still to delay what we dare not refuse;

Ere granting the boon he comes hither to ask,
Shape for the giant gigantic task;
Let us see how a step so sounding can tread
In paths of darkness, danger, and dread;
He may not, he will not, impugn our decree,
That calls but for proof of his chivalry,
And were Guy to return, or sir Bevis the Strong,
Our wilds have adventure might cumber them long,
The castle of seven shields"—"Kind Anselm, no more!
The step of the pagan approaches the door."
The churchmen were hush'd. In his mantle of skin,
With his mace on his shoulder, count Harold strode in.
There was foam on his lip, there was fire in his eye,
For, chafed by attendance, his fury was high.
"Ho! bishop," he said, "dost thou grant me my claim?
Or must I assert it by falchion and flame?"

XII.

"On thy suit, gallant Harold," the bishop replied,
In accents which trembled, "we might not decide,
Until proof of your strength and your valour we saw—
'Tis not that we doubt them, but such is the law."
"And would you, sir Prelate, have Harold make sport
For the cowls and the shavelings that herd in thy court'
Say what shall he do? From the shrine shall he tear
The lead bier of thy patron and heave it in air,
And through the long chaucel make Cuthbert take wing,
With the speed of a bullet dismiss'd from the sling?"
"Nay, spare such prohation," the cellarer said,
"From the mouth of our minstrels thy task shall be read,
While the wine sparkles high in the goblet of gold,
And the revel is loudest, thy task shall be told;
And thyself, gallant Harold, shall, hearing it, tell
That the bishop, his cowls, and his shavelings meant well."

XIII.

Loud revell'd the guests, and the goblets loud rang,
But louder the minstrel, Hugh Meneville, sang;
And Harold, the hurry and pride of whose soul,
E'en when verging to fury, own'd music's control,
Still bent on the harper his broad sable eye,
And often untasted the goblet pass'd by;
Than wine, or than wassail, to him was more dear
The minstrel's high tale of enchantment to hear;
And the bishop that day might of Vinsauf complain
That his art had but wasted his wine-casks in vain.

XIV.

THE CASTLE OF THE SEVEN SHIELDS.—A BALLAD.

The druid Urien had daughters seven,
Their skill could call the moon from heaven;
So fair their forms, and so high their fame,
That seven proud kings for their suitors came.

King Mador and Rhys came from Powis and Wales,
Unshorn was their hair, and unpruned were their nails;
From Strath Clwyde came Ewain, and Ewain was lame,
And the red-bearded Donald from Galloway came.

Lot, king of Lodon, was hunch-back'd from youth;
Dunmail of Cumbria had never a tooth;
But Adolph of Bambrough, Northumberland's heir,
Was gay and was gallant, was young and was fair.

There was strife 'mongst the sisters, for each one would have
For husband king Adolph, the gallant and brave,
And envy bred hate, and hate urged them to blows,
When the firm earth was cleft, and the arch-fiend arose!

He swore to the maidens their wish to fulfil—
They swore to the foe they would work by his will.
A spindle and distaff to each has he given,
"Now hearken my spell," said the outcast of heaven.

"Ye shall ply these spindles at midnight hour,
And for every spindle shall rise a tower,
Where the right shall be feeble, the wrong shall have power,
And there shall ye dwell with your paramour."

Beneath the pale moon-light they sate on the wold,
And the rhymes which they chanted must never be told;
And as the black wool from the distaff they sped,
With blood from their bosom they moisten'd the thread.

As light danc'd the spindles beneath the cold gleam,
The castle arose like the birth of a dream—
The seven towers ascended like mist from the ground,
Seven portals defend them, seven ditches surround,

Within that dread castle seven monarchs were wed,
But six of the seven ere the morning lay dead;
With their eyes all on fire, and their daggers all red,
Seven damsels surround the Northumbrian's bed.

"Six kingly bridegrooms to death we have done,
Six gallant kingdoms king Adolf hath won,
Six lovely brides all his pleasure to do,
Or the bed of the seventh shall be husbandless too."

Well chanced it that Adolf, the night when he wed,
Had confess'd and had sain'd him ere boune to his bed;
He sprung from the couch, and his broadsword he drew,
And there the seven daughters of Urien he slew.

The gate of the castle he bolted and seal'd,
And hung o'er each arch-stone a crown and a shield;
To the cells of saint Dunstan then wended his way,
And died in his cloister an anchorite gray.

Seven monarchs' wealth in that castle lies stow'd,
The foul fiends brood o'er them like raven and toad.
Whoever shall guesten these chambers within,
From curfew till matins, that treasure shall win.

But manhood grows faint as the world waxes old!
There lives not in Britain a champion so bold,
So dauntless of heart, and so prudent of brain,
As to dare the adventure that treasure to gain.

The waste ridge of Cheviot shall wave with the rye,
Before the rude Scots shall Northumberland fly,
And the flint clifts of Bambro' shall melt in the sun,
Before that adventure be peril'd and won.

XV.

"And is this my probation?" wild Harold he said,
"Within a lone castle to press a lone bed?—
Good even, my lord bishop—saint Cuthbert to borrow,
The Castle of Seven Shields receives me to-morrow."

CANTO V.

I.

Denmark's sage courtier to her princely youth,
Granting his cloud an ouzel or a whale,
Spoke, though unwittingly, a partial truth;
For phantasy embroiders nature's veil.
The tints of ruddy eve, or dawning pale,
Of the swart thunder-cloud, or silver haze,
Are but the ground-work of the rich detail
Which phantasy with pencil wild portrays,
Blending what seems and is, in the rapt muser's gaze.

Nor are the stubborn forms of earth and stone
Less to the sorceress's empire given:
For not with unsubstantial hues alone,
Caught from the varying surge, or vacant heaven,
From bursting sunbeam, or from flashing levin,
She limns her pictures—on the earth, as air,
Arise her castles, and her car is driven;
And never gazed the eye on scene so fair,
But of its boasted charms fancy gave half the share.

II.

Up a wild pass went Harold, bent to prove,
Hugh Meneville, the adventure of thy lay;
Gunnar pursued his steps in faith and love,
Ever companion of his master's way.
Midward their path, a rock of granite gray
From the adjoining cliff had made descent,—
A barren mass—yet with her drooping spray,
Had a young birch-tree crowned its battlement,
Twisting her fibrous roots through cranny, flaw, and rent.

This rock and tree could Gunnar's thought engage,
Till fancy brought the tear-drop to his eye,
And at his master asked the timid page,
"What is the emblem that a bard should spy
In that rude rock and its green canopy?"
And Harold said, "Like to the helmet brave
Of warrior slain in fight it seems to lie,
And these same drooping boughs do o'er it wave
Not all unlike the plume his lady's favour gave."

"Ah, no!" replied the page; "the ill-starr'd love
Of some poor maid is in the emblem shown,
Whose fates are with some hero's interwove,
And rooted on a heart to love unknown:
And as the gentle dews of heaven alone
Nourish those drooping boughs, and as the scathe
Of the red lightning rends both tree and stone,
So fares it with her unrequited faith
Her sole relief is tears—her only refuge death."

III.

"Thou art a fond fantastic boy,"
Harold replied, "to females coy,
Yet prating still of love:
Even so amid the clash of war
I know thou lovest to keep afar,
Though destined by thy evil star
With one like me to rove,
Whose business and whose joys are found
Upon the bloody battle-ground.
Yet, foolish trembler as thou art,
Thou hast a nook of my rude heart,
And thou and I will never part;
Harold would wrap the world in flame
Ere injury on Gunnar came."

IV.

The grateful page made no reply,
But turn'd to heaven his gentle eye,
And clasp'd his hands, as one who said,
"My toils—my wanderings are o'erpaid!"
Then in a gayer, lighter strain,
Compell'd himself to speech again;
And, as they flow'd along,
His words took cadence soft and slow,
And liquid, like dissolving snow,
They melted into song.

V.

"What though through fields of carnage wide
I may not follow Harold's stride,
Yet who with faithful Gunnar's pride
Lord Harold's feats can see?
And dearer than the couch of pride
He loves the bed of gray wolf's hide,
When slumbering by lord Harold's side,
In forest, field, or lea."

VI.

"Break off!" said Harold, in a tone
Where hurry and surprise were shown,
With some slight touch of fear,
"Break off, we are not here alone;
A palmer form comes slowly on!
By cowl, and staff, and mantle known,
My monitor is near.
Now mark him, Gunnar, heedfully;
He pauses by the blighted tree—
Dost see him, youth?—Thou could'st not see
When in the vale of Galilee
I first beheld his form,
Nor when we met that other while
In Cephalonia's rocky isle,
Before the fearful storm—
Dost see him now?"—The page, distraught
With terror, answer'd, "I see nought,
And there is nought to see,
Save that the oak's scathed boughs fling down
Upon the path a shadow brown,
That, like a pilgrim's dusky gown,
Waves with the waving tree."

VII.

Count Harold gazed upon the oak
As if his eye-strings would have broke,
And then resolvedly said,
"Be what it will, yon phantom gray,
Nor heaven, nor hell, shall ever say
That for their shadows from his way
Count Harold turn'd dismay'd:
I'll speak him, though his accents fill
My heart with that unwonted thrill
Which vulgar minds call fear.
I will subdue it!"—Forth he strode,
Paused where the blighted oak-tree show'd
Its sable shadow on the road,
And, folding on his bosom broad
His arms, said, "Speak—I hear."

VIII.

The deep voice said, "O wild of will,
Furious thy purpose to fulfil—
Heart-sear'd and unrepentant still,
How long, O Harold, shall thy tread
Disturb the slumbers of the dead?
Each step in thy wild way thou makest
The ashes of the dead thou wakest;
And shout in triumph o'er thy path
The fiends of bloodshed and of wrath.
In this thine hour, yet turn and hear!
For life is brief and judgment near."

IX.

Then ceased the voice.—The Dane replied
In tones where awe and inborn pride
For mastery strove,—"In vain ye chide

The wolf for ravaging the flock,
Or with its hardness taunt the rock,—
I am as they—my Danish strain
Sends streams of fire through every vein.
Amid thy realms of goule and ghost,
Say, is the fame of Erick lost?
Or Witikind's the Waster, known
Where fame or spoil was to be won;
Whose galleys ne'er bore off a shore
They left not black with flame?
He was my sire,—and sprung of him,
That rover merciless, and grim,
Can I be soft and tame?
Part hence, and with my crimes no more upbraid me,
I am that Waster's son, and am but what he made me."

X.

The phantom groan'd; the mountain shook around,
The fawn and wild-doe started at the sound,
The gorse and fern did wildly round them wave,
As if some sudden storm the impulse gave.
"All thou hast said is truth—Yet on the head
Of that bad sire let not the charge be laid,
That he, like thee, with unrelenting pace,
From grave to cradle ran the evil race:
Relentless in his avarice and ire,
Churches and towns he gave to sword and fire;
Shed blood like water, wasted every land,
Like the destroying angel's burning brand;
Fulfill'd whate'er of ill might be invented:
Yes—all these things he did—he did, but he REPENTED!
Perchance it is part of his punishment still,
That his offspring pursues his example of ill.
But thou, when thy tempest of wrath shall next shake thee,
Gird thy loins for resistance, my son, and awake thee;
If thou yield'st to thy fury, how tempted soever,
The gate of repentance shall ope for thee NEVER!"

XI.

"He is gone," said lord Harold, and gazed as he spoke;
"There is nought on the path but the shade of the oak—
He is gone, whose strange presence my feelings oppress'd,
Like the night-hag that sits on the slumberer's breast.
My heart beats as thick as a fugitive's tread,
And cold dews drop from my brow and my head.
Ho! Gunnar, the flasket yon almoner gave;
He said that three drops would recal from the grave.
For the first time count Harold owns leech-craft has power,
Or, his courage to aid, lacks the juice of a flower!"
The page gave the flasket, which Walwayn had fill'd
With the juice of wild roots that his art had distill'd
So baneful their influence on all that had breath,
One drop had been frenzy, and two had been death.
Harold took it, but drank not: for jubilee shrill,
And music and clamour, were heard on the hill,
And down the steep pathway, o'er stock, and o'er stone,
The train of a bridal came blithsomely on;
There was song, there was pipe, there was timbrel, and still
The burden was, "Joy to the fair Metelill!"

XII.

Harold might see from his high stance,
Himself unseen, that train advance
With mirth and melody;—
On horse and foot a mingled throng,
Measuring their steps to bridal song
And bridal minstrelsy;
And ever when the blithsome rout
Lent to the song their choral shout,
Redoubling echoes roll'd about,
While echoing cave and cliff sent out
The answering symphony,
Of all those mimic notes which dwell
In hollow rock and sounding dell.

XIII.

Joy shook his torch above the band,
By many a various passion fann'd;
As elemental sparks can feed
On essence pure and coarsest weed,
Gentle, or stormy, or refined,
Joy takes the colours of the mind.
Lightsome and pure, but unrepress'd,
He fired the bridegroom's gallant breast;
More feebly strove with maiden fear,
Yet still joy glimmer'd through the tear
On the bride's blushing cheek, that shows
Like dew-drop on the budding rose;
While Wulfstane's gloomy smile declared
The joy that selfish avarice shared,
And pleased revenge and malice high
Its semblance took in Jutta's eye.
On dangerous adventure sped,
The witch deem'd Harold with the dead,
For thus that morn her demon said:—
"If, ere the set of sun, be tied
The knot 'twixt bridegroom and his bride,
The Dane shall have no power of ill
O'er William and o'er Metelill."
And the pleased witch made answer, "Then
Must Harold have pass'd from the paths of men!
Evil repose may his spirit have—
May hemlock and mandrake find root in his grave,
May his death-sleep be dogg'd by dreams of dismay,
And his waking be worse at the answering day!"

XIV.

Such was their various mode of glee
Blent in one shout of ecstasy.
But still when joy is brimming highest,
Of sorrow and misfortune nighest,
Of terror with her ague cheek,
And lurking danger, sages speak:—
These haunt each path, but chief they lay
Their snares beside the primrose way.—
Thus found that bridal band their path
Beset by Harold in his wrath.
Trembling beneath his maddening mood,
High on a rock the giant stood;
His shout was like the doom of death
Spoke o'er their heads that pass'd beneath.
His destined victims might not spy
The reddening terrors of his eye—
The frown of rage that writhed his face—
The lip that foam'd like boar's in chase;—
But all could see—and, seeing, all
Bore back to shun the threatened fall—
The fragment which their giant foe
Rent from the cliff and heaved to throw.

XV.

Backward they bore;—yet are there two
For battle who prepare:
No pause of dread lord William knew
Ere his good blade was bare;

And Wulfstane bent his fatal yew,
But ere the silken cord he drew,
As hurl'd from Hecla's thunder, flew
That ruin through the air;
Full on the outlaw's front it came,
And all that late had human name,
And human face, and human frame,
That lived, and moved, and had free will
To choose the path of good or ill,
Is to its reckoning gone;
And nought of Wulfstane rests behind,
Save that beneath that stone,
Half buried in the dinted clay,
A red and shapeless mass there lay,
Of mingled flesh and bone!

XVI.

As from the bosom of the sky
The eagle darts amain,
Three bounds from yonder summit high
Placed Harold on the plain.
As the scared wild-fowl scream and fly,
So fled the bridal train;
As 'gainst the eagle's peerless might
The noble falcon dares the fight,
But dares the fight in vain,
So fought the bridegroom; from his hand
The Dane's rude mace has struck his brand,
Its glittering fragments strew the sand,
Its lord lies on the plain.
Now, heaven! take noble William's part,
And melt that yet unmelted heart,
Or, ere his bridal hour depart,
The hapless bridegroom's slain!

XVII.

Count Harold's frenzied rage is high,
There is a death-fire in his eye,
Deep furrows on his brow are trench'd,
His teeth are set, his hand is clench'd,
The foam upon his lip is white,
His deadly arm is up to smite!
But, as the mace aloft he swung,
To stop the blow young Gunnar sprung,
Around his master's knees he clung,
And cried, "In mercy spare!
O, think upon the words of fear
Spoke by that visionary seer,
The crisis he foretold is here—
Grant mercy—or despair!"
This word suspended Harold's mood,
Yet still with arm upraised he stood,
And visage like the headsman's rude
That pauses for the sign.
"O mark thee with the blessed rood,"
The page implored: "Speak word of good,
Resist the fiend, or be subdued!"
He signed the cross divine—
Instant his eye hath human light,
Less red, less keen, less fiercely bright;
His brow relax'd the obdurate frown,
The fatal mace sinks gently down,
He turns and strides away;
Yet oft, like revellers who leave
Unfinish'd feast, looks back to grieve,
As if repenting the reprieve
He granted to his prey.
Yet still of forbearance one sign hath he given,
And fierce Witikind's son made one step towards heaven.

XVIII.

But though his dreaded footsteps part,
Death is behind and shakes his dart:
Lord William on the plain is lying,
Beside him Metelill seems dying!
Bring odours—essences in haste—
And lo! a flasket richly chased,
But Jutta the elixir proves
Ere pouring it for those she loves—
Then Walwayn's potion was not wasted,
For when three drops the hag had tasted,
So dismal was her yell,
Each bird of evil omen woke,
The raven gave his fatal croak,
And shriek'd the night-crow from the oak,
The screech-owl from the thicket broke,
And flutter'd down the dell!
So fearful was the sound and stern,
The slumbers of the full-gorged erne
Were startled, and from furze and fern,
Of forest and of fell,
The fox and famish'd wolf replied,
(For wolves then prowl'd the Cheviot side,)
From mountain head to mountain head
The unhallow'd sounds around were sped;
But when their latest echo fled,
The sorceress on the ground lay dead.

XIX.

Such was the scene of blood and woes,
With which the bridal morn arose
Of William and of Metelill;
But oft, when dawning 'gins to spread,
The summer-morn peeps dim and red
Above the eastern hill,
Ere, bright and fair, upon his road
The king of splendour walks abroad;
So, when this cloud had pass'd away,
Bright was the noon-tide of their day,
And all serene its setting ray.

CANTO VI.

I.

Well do I hope that this my minstrel tale
Will tempt no traveller from southern fields,
Whether in tilbury, barouche, or mail,
To view the castle of these seven proud shields.
Small confirmation its condition yields
To Meneville's high lay—no towers are seen
On the wild heath, but those that fancy builds,
And, save a fosse which tracks the moor with green,
Is nought remains to tell of what may there have been.
And yet grave authors, with the no small waste
Of their grave time, have dignified the spot
By theories, to prove the fortress placed
By Roman hands, to curb the invading Scot.
Hutchinson, Horsley, Camden, I might quote,
But rather choose the theory less civil
Of boors, who, origin of things forgot,
Refer still to the origin of evil,
And for their master-mason choose that master-fiend the devil.

II.

Therefore, I say, it was on fiend-built towers
That stout count Harold bent his wond'ring gaze,
When evening dew was on the heather flowers,
And the last sunbeams bade the mountain blaze,
And tinged the battlements of other days
With a bright level light ere sinking down.
Illumined thus, the dauntless Dane surveys
The seven proud shields that o'er the portal frown,
And on their blazons traced high marks of old renown.

A wolf North Wales had on his armour-coat,
And Rhys of Powis-land a couchant stag;
Strath-Clwyde's strange emblem was a stranded boat;
Donald of Galloway a trotting nag;
A corn-sheaf gilt was fertile Lodon's brag;
A dudgeon-dagger was by Dunmail worn;
Northumbrian Adolf gave a sea-beat crag
Surmounted by a cross—such signs were borne
Upon these antique shields, all wasted now and worn.

III.

These scann'd, count Harold sought the castle door,
Whose ponderous bolts were rusted to decay;
Yet till that hour adventurous knight forbore
The unobstructed passage to essay.
More strong than armed warders in array,
And obstacle more sure than bolt or bar,
Sate in the portal Terror and Dismay,
While Superstition, who forbade to war
With foes of other mould than mortal clay,
Cast spells across the gate, and barr'd the onward way.

Vain now those spells—for soon with heavy clank
The feebly-fasten'd gate was inward push'd,
And, as it oped, through that emblazon'd rank
Of antique shields the wind of evening rush'd
With sound most like a groan, and then was hush'd.
Is none who on such spot such sounds could hear
But to his heart the blood had faster rush'd,
Yet to bold Harold's breast that throb was dear,
It spoke of danger nigh, but had no touch of fear.

IV.

Yet Harold and his page no signs have traced
Within the castle that of danger show'd;
For still the halls and courts were wild and waste,
As through their precincts the adventurers strode.
The seven huge towers rose stately, tall, and broad,
Each tower presenting to their scrutiny
A hall in which a king might make abode,
And fast beside, garnish'd both proud and high,
Was placed a bower for rest in which a king might lie.

As if a bridal there of late had been,
Deck'd stood the table in each gorgeous hall;
And yet it was two hundred years, I ween,
Since date of that unhallow'd festival.
Flagons, and ewers, and standing cups, were all
Of tarnish'd gold, or silver nothing clear,
With throne begilt, and canopy of pall,
And tapestry clothed the walls with fragments sear,—
Frail as the spider's mesh did that rich woof appear.

V.

In every bower, as round a hearse, was hung
A dusky crimson curtain o'er the bed,
And on each couch in ghastly wise were flung
The wasted relics of a monarch dead;
Barbaric ornaments around were spread,
Vests twined with gold, and chains of precious stone,
And golden circlets, meet for monarch's head;
While grinn'd, as if in scorn amongst them thrown,
The wearer's fleshless scull, alike with dust bestrown.

For these were they who, drunken with delight,
On pleasure's opiate pillow laid their head,
For whom the bride's shy footstep, slow and light,
Was changed ere morning to the murderer' tread.
For human bliss and wo in the frail thread
Of human life are all so closely twined,
That till the shears of fate the texture shred,
The close succession cannot be disjoin'd,
Nor dare we from one hour judge that which comes behind.

VI.

But where the work of vengeance had been done,
In that seventh chamber was a sterner sight;
There of the witch-brides lay each skeleton,
Still in the posture as to death when dight.
For this lay prone, by one blow slain outright;
And that, as one who struggled long in dying;
One bony hand held knife as if to smite;
One bent on fleshless knees as mercy crying;
One lay across the door, as kill'd in act of flying.

The stern Dane smiled this charnel-house to see—
For his chafed thought return'd to Metelill;
And, "Well," he said, "hath woman's perfidy,
Empty as air, as water volatile,
Been here avenged.—The origin of ill
Thro' woman rose, the christian doctrine saith;
Nor deem I, Gunnar, that thy minstrel skill
Can show example where a woman's breath
Hath made a true-love vow, and tempted, kept her faith."

VII.

The minstrel boy half smiled, half sigh'd,
And his half filling eyes he dried,
And said, "The theme I should but wrong,
Unless it were my dying song,
(Our scalds have said in dying hour
The northern harp has treble power,)
Else could I tell of woman's faith
Defying danger, scorn, and death.
Firm was that faith—as diamond stone
Pure and unflaw'd—her love unknown,
And unrequited; firm and pure,
Her stainless faith could all endure;
From clime to clime—from place to place—
Through want, and danger, and disgrace,
A wanderer's wayward steps could trace.
All this she did, and guerdon none
Required, save that her burial-stone
Should make at length her secret known.
Thus hath a faithful woman done.
Not in each breast such truth is laid,
But Eivir was a Danish maid."

VIII.

"Thou art a wild enthusiast," said
Count Harold, "for thy Danish maid;
And yet, young Gunnar, I will own
Her's were a faith to rest upon.
But Eivir sleeps beneath her stone,
And all resembling her are gone.
What maid e'er show'd such constancy
In plighted faith, like thine to me?
But couch thee, boy; the darksome shade
Falls thickly round, nor be dismay'd
Because the dead are by.
They were as we; our little day
O'erspent, and we shall be as they.
Yet near me, Gunnar, be thou laid,
Thy couch upon my mantle made,
That thou may'st think, should fear invade,
Thy master slumbers nigh."
Thus couch'd they in that dread abode
Until the beams of dawning glow'd.

IX.

An alter'd man lord Harold rose,
When he beheld that dawn unclose—
There's trouble in his eyes,
And traces on his brow and cheek
Of mingled awe and wonder speak:
"My page," he said, "arise;
Leave we this place, my page." Nor more
He utter'd till the castle door
They cross'd—but there he paused and said,
"My wildness hath awaked the dead—
Disturb'd the sacred tomb!
Methought this night I stood on high
Where Hecla roars in middle sky,
And in her cavern'd gulfs could spy
The central place of doom!
And there before my mortal eye
Souls of the dead came flitting by,
Whom fiends, with many a fiendish cry,
Bore to that evil den!
My eyes grew dizzy, and my brain
Was wilder'd, as the elvish train,
With shriek and howl, dragg'd on amain
Those who had late been men.

X.

"With haggard eyes and streaming hair,
Jutta, the sorceress, was there,
And there pass'd Wulfstane, lately slain,
All crush'd and foul with bloody stain.
More had I seen, but that uprose
A whirlwind wild, and swept the snows;
And with such sound as when at need
A champion spurs his horse to speed,
Three armed knights rush on, who lead
Caparison'd a sable steed.
Sable their harness, and there came
Through their closed visors sparks of flame.
The first proclaim'd, in sounds of fear,
'Harold the Dauntless, welcome here!'
The next cried, 'Jubilee! we've won
Count Witikind the Waster's son!'
And the third rider sternly spoke,
'Mount, in the name of Zernebock!
From us, O Harold, were thy powers,
Thy strength, thy dauntlessness, are ours;
Nor think, a vassal thou of hell,
With hell canst strive.' The fiend spoke true!
My inmost soul the summons knew,
As captives know the knell,
That says the headsman's sword is bare,
And with an accent of despair
Commands them quit their cell.
I felt resistance was in vain,
My foot had that fell stirrup ta'en,
My hand was on the fatal mane,
When to my rescue sped
That palmer's visionary form,
And, like the passing of a storm,
The demons yell'd and fled!

XI.

"His sable cowl, flung back, reveal'd
The features it before conceal'd;
And, Gunnar, I could find
In him whose counsels strove to stay
So oft my course on wilful way,
My father Witikind!
Doom'd for his sins, and doom'd for mine,
A wanderer upon earth to pine,
Until his son shall turn to grace,
And smooth for him a resting-place!
Gunnar, he must not haunt in vain
This world of wretchedness and pain:
I'll tame my wilful heart to live
In peace—to pity and forgive—
And thou, for so the vision said,
Must in thy lord's repentance aid.
Thy mother was a prophetess,"
He said, "who by her skill could guess
How close the fatal textures join
Which knit that thread of life with mine;
Then, dark, he hinted of disguise
She framed to cheat too curious eyes,
That not a moment might divide
Thy fated footsteps from my side.
Methought, while thus my sire did teach,
I caught the meaning of his speech,
Yet seems its purport doubtful now."
His hand then sought his thoughtful brow,
Then first he mark'd, that in the tower
His glove was left at waking hour.

XII.

Trembling at first, and deadly pale,
Had Gunnar heard the vision'd tale;
But when he learn'd the dubious close,
He blushed like any opening rose,
And, glad to hide his tell-tale cheek,
Hied back that glove of mail to seek;
When soon a shriek of deadly dread
Summon'd his master to his aid.

XIII.

What sees count Harold in that bower,
So late his resting place?
The semblance of the Evil Power,
Adored by all his race!
Odin in living form stood there,
His cloak the spoils of polar bear;
For plumy crest, a meteor shed
Its gloomy radiance o'er his head,
Yet veil'd its haggard majesty
To the wild lightnings of his eye.
Such height was his, as when in stone
O'er Upsal's giant altar shown;
So flow'd his hoary beard;
Such was his lance of mountain-pine,
So did his sevenfold buckler shine;
But when his voice he rear'd,
Deep, without harshness, slow and strong,
The powerful accents roll'd along,
And, while he spoke, his hand was laid
On captive Gunnar's shrinking head.

XIV.

"Harold," he said, "What rage is thine
To quit the worship of thy line,
To leave thy warrior god?
With me is glory or disgrace,
Mine is the onset and the chase,
Embattled hosts before my face
Are withered by a nod.
Wilt thou then forfeit that high seat,
Deserved by many a dauntless feat
Among the heroes of thy line,
Eric and fiery Thorarine?
Thou wilt not. Only I can give
The joys for which the valiant live,
Victory and vengeance—only I
Can give the joys for which they die,
The immortal tilt—the banquet full,
The brimming draught from foeman's skull.
Mine art thou, witness this thy glove,
The faithful pledge of vassal's love."

XV.

" Tempter!" said Harold, firm of heart,
" I charge thee, hence! whate'er thou art,
I do defy thee—and resist
The kindling frenzy of my breast,
Waked by thy words; and of my mail
Nor glove, nor buckler, splent, nor nail,
Shall rest with thee—that youth release,
And god, or demon, part in peace."
" Eivir," the shape replied, " is mine,
Mark'd in the birth-hour with my sign.
Think'st thou that priest with drops of spray
Could wash that blood-red mark away?
Or that a borrow'd sex and name
Can abrogate a godhead's claim?"
Thrill'd this strange speech thro' Harold's brain,
He clench'd his teeth in high disdain,
For not his new-born faith subdued
Some tokens of his ancient mood.
" Now, by the hope so lately given
Of better trust and purer heaven,
I will assail thee, fiend!" Then rose
His mace, and with a storm of blows
The mortal and the demon close.

XVI.

Smoke roll'd above, fire flash'd around,
Darken'd the sky and shook the ground;
But not the artillery of hell,
The bickering lightning, nor the rock
Of turrets to the earthquake's shock,
Could Harold's courage quell.
Sternly the Dane his purpose kept,
And blows on blows resistless heap'd,
Till quail'd that demon form;
And—for his power to hurt or kill
Was bounded by a higher will—
Evanish'd in the storm.
Nor paused the champion of the north,
But raised, and bore his Eivir forth
From that wild scene of fiendish strife,
To light, to liberty, and life!

XVII.

He placed her on a bank of moss,
A silver runnel bubbled by,
And new-born thoughts his soul engross,
And tremors yet unknown across
His stubborn sinews fly;
The while with timid hand the dew
Upon her brow and neck he threw,
And mark'd how life with rosy hue
On her pale cheek revived anew,
And glimmer'd in her eye.
Inly he said, " That silken tress,
What blindness mine that could not guess,
Or how could page's rugged dress
That bosom's pride belie?
O, dull of heart, through wild and wave
In search of blood and death to rave,
With such a partner nigh!"

XVIII.

Then in the mirror'd pool he peer'd,
Blamed his rough locks and shaggy beard,
The stains of recent conflict clear'd—
And thus the champion proved,
That he fears now who never fear'd,
And loves who never loved.
And Eivir—life is on her cheek,
And yet she will not move or speak,
Nor will her eyelid fully ope;
Perchance it loves, that half-shut eye,
Through its long fringe, reserved and shy,
Affection's opening dawn to spy;
And the deep blush, which bids its dye
O'er cheek, and brow, and bosom fly,
Speaks shame-facedness and hope.

XIX.

But vainly seems the Dane to seek
For terms his new-born love to speak,—
For words, save those of wrath and wrong,
Till now were strangers to his tongue;
So, when he raised the blushing maid,
In blunt and honest terms he said,—
('Twere well that maids, when lovers woo,
Heard none more soft, were all as true,)
" Eivir! since thou for many a day
Hast followed Harold's wayward way,
It is but meet that in the line
Of after-life I follow thine.
To morrow is saint Cuthbert's tide,
And we will grace his altar's side,
A christian knight and christian bride;
And of Witikind's son shall the marvel be said,
That on the same morn he was christen'd and wed."

CONCLUSION.

And now, Ennui, what ails thee, weary maid?
And why these listless looks of yawning sorrow.
No need to turn the page, as if 'twere lead,
Or fling aside the volume till to-morrow.
Be cheer'd—'tis ended—and I will not borrow,
To try thy patience more, one anecdote
From Bartholine, or Perinskiold, or Snorro.
Then pardon thou thy minstrel, who hath wrote
A tale six cantos long, yet scorn'd to add a note.

The Bridal of Triermain;

OR,

THE VALE OF ST. JOHN.

A LOVER'S TALE.

An elf-quene wol I love ywis,
For in this world no woman is
Worthy to be my make in toun:
All other women I forsake,
And to an elf-quene I me take
By dale and eke by doun.
Rime of sir Thopas.

PREFACE.

In the *Edinburgh Annual Register* for the year 1809, three fragments were inserted, written in imitation of living poets. It must have been apparent, that by these prolusions, nothing burlesque or disrespectful to the authors was intended, but that they were offered to the public as serious, though certainly very imperfect, imitations of that style of composition, by which each of the writers is supposed to be distinguished. As these exercises attracted a greater degree of attention than the author anticipated, he has been induced to complete one of them, and present it as a separate publication.

It is not in this place that an examination of the works of the master whom he has here adopted as his model can, with propriety, be introduced; since his general acquiescence in the favourable suffrage of the public must necessarily be inferred from the attempt he has now made. He is induced, by the nature of his subject, to offer a few remarks on what has been called *Romantic Poetry*,—the popularity of which has been revived in the present day, under the auspices, and by the unparalleled success of one individual.

The original purpose of poetry is either religious or historical, or, as must frequently happen, a mixture of both. To modern readers, the poems of Homer have many of the features of pure romance; but, in the estimation of his contemporaries, they probably derived their chief value from their supposed historical authenticity. The same may be generally said of the poetry of all early ages. The marvels and miracles which the poet blends with his song do not exceed in number or extravagance the figments of the historians of the same period of society; and, indeed, the difference betwixt poetry and prose, as the vehicles of historical truth, is always of late introduction. Poets, under various denominations of Bards, Scalds, Chroniclers, and so forth, are the first historians of all nations. Their intention is to relate the events they have witnessed, or the traditions that have reached them; and they clothe the relation in rhyme, merely as the means of rendering it more solemn in the narrative, or more easily committed to memory. But as the poetical historian improves in the art of conveying information, the authenticity of his narrative unavoidably declines. He is tempted to dilate and dwell upon the events that are interesting to his imagination, and, conscious how different his audience is to the naked truth of his poem, his history gradually becomes a romance.

It is in this situation that those epics are found which have been generally regarded the standards of poetry; and it has happened somewhat strangely, that the moderns have pointed out, as the characteristics and peculiar excellences of narrative poetry, the very circumstances which the authors themselves adopted, only because their art involved the duties of the historian as well as the poet. It cannot be believed, for example, that Homer selected the siege of Troy as the most appropriate subject for poetry; his purpose was to write the early history of his country: the event he has chosen, though not very fruitful in varied incident, nor perfectly well adapted for poetry, was nevertheless combined with traditionary and genealogical anecdotes extremely interesting to those who were to listen to him; and this he has adorned by the exertions of a genius, which, if it has been equalled, has certainly never been surpassed. It was not till comparatively a late period that the general accuracy of his narrative, or his purpose in composing it, was brought into question. Δοκει πρωτος ὁ Αναξαγορας (καθα φησι Φαβορινος εν παντοδαπῃ Ἱστορια) την Ομηρου ποιησιν αποφηνασθαι ειναι αρετης και δικαιοσυνης.* But whatever theories might be framed by speculative men, his work was of an historical, not of an allegorical nature. Εναυτιλλετο μετα του Μεντεως, και ὁπου ἑκαστοτε αφικοιτο, παντα τα επιχωρια διερωτατο, και ἱστορευων επυνθανετο· εισης δε μιν ην και μνημοσυνα παντων γραφεσθαι.† Instead of recommending the choice of a subject similar to that of Homer, it was to be expected that critics should have exhorted the poets of these later days to adopt or invent a narrative in itself more susceptible of poetical ornament, and to avail themselves of that advantage in order to compensate, in some degree, the inferiority of genius. The contrary course has been inculcated by almost all the writers upon the *Epopœia;* with what success, the fate of Homer's numerous imitators may best show. The *ultimum supplicium* of criticism was inflicted on the author if he did not choose a subject which at once deprived him of all claim to originality, and placed him, if not in actual contest, at least in fatal comparison, with those giants in the land, whom it was most his interest to avoid. The celebrated recipe for writing an epic poem, which appeared in the Guardian, was the first instance in which common sense was applied to this department of poetry; and indeed, if the question be considered on its own merits, we must be satisfied that narra-

* Diogenes Laertius, l. xi, p. 8. † Homeri Vita.

tive poetry, if strictly confined to the great occurrences of history, would be deprived of the individual interest which it is so well calculated to excite.

Modern poets may therefore be pardoned in seeking simpler subjects of verse, more interesting in proportion to their simplicity. Two or three figures, well grouped, suited the artist better than a crowd, for whatever purpose assembled. For the same reason a scene immediately presented to the imagination, and directly brought home to the feelings, though involving the fate but of one or two persons, is more favourable for poetry than the political struggles and convulsions which influence the fate of kingdoms. The former are within the reach and comprehension of all, and, if depicted

to him, excepting to be heavy or prosaic, for which, free and unembarrassed as he is, he has no manner of apology. Those, it is probable, will be found the peculiarities of this species of composition: and, before joining the outcry against the vitiated taste that fosters and encourages it, the justice and grounds of it ought to be made perfectly apparent. If the want of sieges and battles and great military evolutions in our poetry is complained of, let us reflect, that the campaigns and heroes of our day are perpetuated in a record that neither requires nor admits of the aid of fiction; and if the complaint refers to the inferiority of our bards, let us pay a just tribute to their modesty, limiting them, as it does, to subjects, which, however indifferently treated, have still the interest and charm of novelty, and which thus prevents them from adding insipidity to their other more insuperable defects.

THE BRIDAL OF TRIERMAIN.

INTRODUCTION.

I.

Come, Lucy! while 'tis morning hour,
The woodland brook we needs must pass;
So, ere the sun assume his power,
We shelter in our poplar bower,
Where dew lies long upon the flower,
Though vanished from the velvet grass.
Curbing the stream, this stony ridge
May serve us for a sylvan bridge;

IV.

How deep that blush!—how deep that sigh!
And why does Lucy shun mine eye?
Is it because that crimson draws
Its colour from some secret cause,
Some hidden movement of the breast,
She would not that her Arthur guess'd?
O! quicker far is lovers' ken
Than the dull glance of common men,
And by strange sympathy, can spell
The thoughts the loved one will not tell!
And mine, in Lucy's blush, saw met
The hue of pleasure and regret;
Pride mingled in the sigh her voice,
And shared with Love the crimson glow;

The Bridal of Triermain;

OR,

THE VALE OF ST. JOHN.

A LOVER'S TALE.

An elf-quene wol I love ywis,
For in this world no woman is
Worthy to be my make in toun:
All other women I forsake,
And to an elf-quene I me take
By dale and eke by doun.
Rime of sir Thopas.

under various denominations of Bards, Scalds, Chroniclers, and so forth, are the first historians of all nations. Their intention is to relate the events they have witnessed, or the traditions that have reached them; and they clothe the relation in rhyme, merely as the means of rendering it more solemn in the narrative, or more easily committed to memory. But as the poetical historian improves in the art of conveying information, the authenticity of his narrative unavoidably declines. He is tempted to dilate and dwell upon the events that are interesting to his imagination, and, conscious how different his audience is to the naked truth of his poem, his history gradually becomes a romance.

Epopæia; with what success, the fate of Homer's numerous imitators may best show. The *ultimum supplicium* of criticism was inflicted on the author if he did not choose a subject which at once deprived him of all claim to originality, and placed him, if not in actual contest, at least in fatal comparison, with those giants in the land, whom it was most his interest to avoid. The celebrated recipe for writing an epic poem, which appeared in the Guardian, was the first instance in which common sense was applied to this department of poetry; and indeed, if the question be considered on its own merits, we must be satisfied that narra-

* Diogenes Laertius, l. xi, p. 8. † Homeri Vita.

tive poetry, if strictly confined to the great occurrences of history, would be deprived of the individual interest which it is so well calculated to excite.

Modern poets may therefore be pardoned in seeking simpler subjects of verse, more interesting in proportion to their simplicity. Two or three figures, well grouped, suited the artist better than a crowd, for whatever purpose assembled. For the same reason a scene immediately presented to the imagination, and directly brought home to the feelings, though involving the fate but of one or two persons, is more favourable for poetry than the political struggles and convulsions which influence the fate of kingdoms. The former are within the reach and comprehension of all, and, if depicted with vigour, seldom fail to fix attention: the other, if more sublime, are more vague and distant, less capable of being distinctly understood, and infinitely less capable of exciting those sentiments which it is the very purpose of poetry to inspire. To generalize is always to destroy effect. We would, for example, be more interested in the fate of an individual soldier in combat, than in the grand event of a general action; with the happiness of two lovers raised from misery and anxiety to peace and union, than with the successful exertions of a whole nation. From what causes this may originate, is a separate, and obviously an immaterial consideration. Before ascribing this peculiarity to causes decidedly and odiously selfish, it is proper to recollect, that while men see only a limited space, and while their affections and conduct are regulated, not by aspiring at an universal good, but by exerting their power of making themselves and others happy within the limited scale allotted to each individual, so long will individual history and individual virtue be the readier and more accessible road to general interest and attention; and perhaps we may add, that it is the more useful, as well as the more accessible, inasmuch as it affords an example capable of being easily imitated.

According to the author's idea of Romantic Poetry, as distinguished from Epic, the former comprehends a fictitious narrative, framed and combined at the pleasure of the writer; beginning and ending as he may judge best; which neither exacts nor refuses the use of supernatural machinery; which is free from the technical rules of the *Epée;* and is subject only to those which good sense, good taste, and good morals apply to every species of poetry without exception. The date may be in a remote age, or in the present; the story may detail the adventures of a prince or of a peasant. In a word, the author is absolute master of his country and its inhabitants, and every thing is permitted to him, excepting to be heavy or prosaic, for which, free and unembarrassed as he is, he has no manner of apology. Those, it is probable, will be found the peculiarities of this species of composition: and, before joining the outcry against the vitiated taste that fosters and encourages it, the justice and grounds of it ought to be made perfectly apparent. If the want of sieges and battles and great military evolutions in our poetry is complained of, let us reflect, that the campaigns and heroes of our day are perpetuated in a record that neither requires nor admits of the aid of fiction; and if the complaint refers to the inferiority of our bards, let us pay a just tribute to their modesty, limiting them, as it does, to subjects, which, however indifferently treated, have still the interest and charm of novelty, and which thus prevents them from adding insipidity to their other more insuperable defects.

THE BRIDAL OF TRIERMAIN.

INTRODUCTION.

I.

Come, Lucy! while 'tis morning hour,
The woodland brook we needs must pass;
So, ere the sun assume his power,
We shelter in our poplar bower,
Where dew lies long upon the flower,
Though vanished from the velvet grass.
Curbing the stream, this stony ridge
May serve us for a sylvan bridge;
For here, compelled to disunite,
Round petty isles the runnels glide,
And, chafing off their puny spite,
The shallow murmurs waste their might,
Yielding to footsteps free and light
A dry-shod pass from side to side.

II.

Nay, why this hesitating pause?
And, Lucy, as thy step withdraws,
Why sidelong eye the streamlet's brim?
Titania's foot without a slip,
Like thine, though timid, light, and slim,
From stone to stone might safely trip,
Nor risk the glow-worm clasp to dip
That binds her slipper's silken rim.
Or trust thy lover's strength; nor fear
That this same stalwart arm of mine,
Which could yon oak's prone trunk upreai,
Shall sink beneath the burthen dear
Of form so slender, light, and fine.—
So,—now, the danger dared at last,
Look back and smile at perils past!

III.

And now we reach the favourite glade,
Paled in by copse-wood, cliff, and stone,
Where never harsher sounds invade,
To break affection's whispering tone,
Than the deep breeze that waves the shade,
Than the small brooklet's feeble moan.
Come! rest thee on thy wonted seat;
Moss'd is the stone, the turf is green,
A place where lovers best may meet,
Who would not that their love be seen.
The boughs, that dim the summer sky,
Shall hide us from each lurking spy,
That fain would spread the invidious tale,
How Lucy of the lofty eye,
Noble in birth, in fortunes high,
She for whom lords and barons sigh,
Meets her poor Arthur in the dale.

IV.

How deep that blush!—how deep that sigh!
And why does Lucy shun mine eye?
Is it because that crimson draws
Its colour from some secret cause,
Some hidden movement of the breast,
She would not that her Arthur guess'd?
O! quicker far is lovers' ken
Than the dull glance of common men,
And by strange sympathy, can spell
The thoughts the loved one will not tell!
And mine, in Lucy's blush, saw met
The hue of pleasure and regret;
Pride mingled in the sigh her voice,
And shared with Love the crimson glow;

Well pleased that thou art Arthur's choice,
Yet shamed thine own is placed so low.
Thou turn'st thy self-confessing cheek,
As if to meet the breeze's cooling;
Then, Lucy, hear thy tutor speak,
For Love, too, has his hours of schooling.

V.

Too oft my anxious eye has spied
That secret grief thou fain would'st hide,
The passing pang of humbled pride:
Too oft, when through the splendid hall,
The load-star of each heart and eye,
My fair one leads the glittering ball,
Will her stolen glance on Arthur fall,
With such a blush and such a sigh!
Thou would'st not yield, for wealth or rank,
The heart thy worth and beauty won,
Nor leave me on this mossy bank,
To meet a rival on a throne:
Why, then, should vain repinings rise,
That to thy lover fate denies
A nobler name, a wide domain,
A baron's birth, a menial train,
Since heaven assign'd him, for his part,
A lyre, a falchion, and a heart?

VI.

My sword——its master must be dumb;
But, when a soldier names my name,
Approach, my Lucy! fearless come,
Nor dread to hear of Arthur's shame.
My heart——'mid all yon courtly crew,
Of lordly rank and lofty line,
Is there to love and honour true,
That boasts a pulse so warm as mine?
They praised thy diamond's lustre rare—
Matched with thine eyes, I thought it faded;
They praised the pearls that bound thy hair—
I only saw the locks they braided;
They talked of wealthy dower and land,
And titles of high birth the token—
I thought of Lucy's heart and hand,
Nor knew the sense of what was spoken.
And yet, if ranked in fortune's roll,
I might have learn'd their choice unwise,
Who rate the dower above the soul,
And Lucy's diamonds o'er her eyes.

VII.

My lyre—it is an idle toy,
That borrows accents not its own,
Like warbler of Columbian sky.
That sings but in a mimic tone.*
Ne'er did it sound o'er sainted well,
Nor boasts it aught of border spell;
Its strings no feudal slogan pour,
Its heroes draw no broad claymore;
No shouting clans applauses raise,
Because it sung their father's praise;
On Scottish moor, or English down,
It ne'er was graced with fair renown,
Nor won,—best meed to minstrel true,—
One favouring smile from fair Buccleuch!
By one poor streamlet sounds its tone,
And heard by one dear maid alone.

VIII.

But, if thou bid'st, these tones shall tell
Of errant knight and damozelle;
Of the dread knot a wizard tied,
In punishment of maiden's pride,
In notes of marvel and of fear,
That best may charm romantic ear.

* The Mocking bird.

For Lucy loves,—like Collins, ill-starr'd name![1]
Whose lay's requital was, that tardy fame,
Who bound no laurel round his living head,
Should hang it o'er his monument when dead,—
For Lucy loves to tread enchanted strand,
And thread, like him, the maze of fairy-land;
Of golden battlements to view the gleam,
And slumber soft by some Elysian stream:
Such lays she loves,—and, such my Lucy's choice,
What other song can claim her poet's voice?

CANTO I.

I.

Where is the maiden of mortal strain,
That may watch with the baron of Triermain?[2]
She must be lovely and constant and kind,
Holy and pure and humble of mind,
Blith of cheer and gentle of mood,
Courteous and generous and noble of blood—
Lovely as the sun's first ray,
When it breaks the clouds of an April day;
Constant and true as the widow'd dove,
Kind as a minstrel that sings of love;
Pure as the fountain in rocky cave,
Where never sun-beam kissed the wave:
Humble as maiden that loves in vain,
Holy as hermit's vesper strain;
Gentle as breeze that but whispers and dies,
Yet blith as the light leaves that dance in its sighs;
Courteous as monarch the morn he is crown'd,
Gen'rous as spring-dews that bless the glad ground,
Noble her blood as the currents that met
In the veins of the noblest Platagenet——
Such must her form be, her mood, and her strain,
That shall match with sir Roland of Triermain.

II.

Sir Roland de Vaux he hath laid him to sleep,
His blood it was fevered, his breathing was deep.
He had been pricking against the Scot,
The foray was long and the skirmish hot;
His dinted helm and his buckler's plight
Bore token of a stubborn fight.
All in the castle must hold them still,
Harpers must lull him to his rest,
With the slow soft tunes he loves the best,
Till sleep sink down upon his breast,
Like the dew on a summer hill.

III.

It was the dawn of an autumn day;
The sun was struggling with frost fog gray,
That like a silvery crape was spread
Round Skiddaw's dim and distant head,
And faintly gleam'd each painted pane
Of the lordly halls of Triermain,
When that baron bold awoke.
Starting he woke, and loudly did call,
Rousing his menials in bower and hall,
While hastily he spoke.

IV.

"Hearken, my minstrels! Which of ye all
Touch'd his harp with that dying fall,
So sweet, so soft, so faint,
It seem'd an angel's whisper'd call
To an expiring saint?
And hearken, my merrymen! what time or where
Did she pass, that maid with her heav'nly brow
With her look so sweet and her eyes so fair,
And her graceful step and her angel air,
And the eagle plume in her dark brown hair,
That pass'd from my bower e'en now?"—

V.

Answer'd him Richard de Brettville; he
Was chief of the baron's minstrelsy,—
"Silent, noble chieftain, we
Have sate since midnight close,
When such lulling sounds as the brooklet sings,
Murmur'd from our melting strings,
And hush'd you to repose.
Had a harp-note sounded here,
It had caught my watchful ear,
Although it fell as faint and shy
As bashful maiden's half-form'd sigh,
When she thinks her lover near."—
Answer'd Philip of Fasthwaite tall,
He kept guard in the outer hall,—
"Since at eve our watch took post,
Not a foot has thy portal cross'd;
Else had I heard the steps, though low
And light they fell as when earth receives,
In morn of frost, the withered leaves,
That drop when no winds blow."

VI.

"Then come thou hither, Henry, my page,
Whom I saved from sack of Hermitage,
When that dark castle, tower, and spire,
Rose to the skies a pile of fire,
And redden'd all the Nine-stane hill,
And the shrieks of death, that wildly broke
Thro' devouring flame and smothering smoke,
Made the warrior's heart-blood chill!
The trustiest thou of all my train,
My fleetest courser thou must rein,
And ride to Lyulph's tower,
And from the baron of Triermain
Greet well that sage of power.
He is sprung from druid sires,
And British bards that tuned their lyres
To Arthur's and Pendragon's praise,
And his who sleeps at Dunmailraise.[3]
Gifted like his gifted race,
He the characters can trace,
Graven deep in elder time
Upon Helvellyn's cliffs sublime;
Sign and sigil well doth he know,
And can bode of weal and wo,
Of kingdoms' fall, and fate of wars,
From mystic dreams and course of stars.
He shall tell if middle earth
To that enchanting shape gave birth,
Or if 'twas but an airy thing,
Such as fantastic slumbers bring,
Framed from the rainbow's varying dyes,
Or fading tints of western skies.
For, by the blessed rood I swear,
If that fair form breathe vital air,
No other maiden by my side
Shall ever rest De Vaux's bride!"

VII.

The faithful page he mounts his steed,
And soon he cross'd green Irthing's mead,
Dash'd o'er Kirkoswald's verdant plain,
And Eden barr'd his course in vain.
He pass'd red Penrith's Table Round,[4]
For feats of chivalry renown'd,
Left Myburgh's mound and stones of pow'r,[5]
By druids raised in magic hour,
And traced the Eamont's winding way,
Till Ulfo's lake beneath him lay.

VIII.

Onward he rode, the path-way still
Winding betwixt the lake and hill;
Till on the fragment of a rock,
Struck from its base by lightning shock,
He saw the hoary sage:
The silver moss and lichen twined,
With fern and deer-hair cheek'd and lined,
A cushion fit for age;
And o'er him shook the aspen tree,
A restless rustling canopy.
Then sprung young Henry from his selle,
And greeted Lyulph grave,
And then his master's tale did tell,
And then for counsel crave.
The man of years mused long and deep,
Of time's lost treasures taking keep,
And then, as rousing from a sleep,
His solemn answer gave.

IX.

"That maid is born of middle earth,
And may of man be won,
Though there have glided since her birth,
Five hundred years and one.
But where's the knight in all the north,
That dare the adventure follow forth,
So perilous to knightly worth,
In the valley of saint John?
Listen, youth, to what I tell,
And bind it on thy memory well:
Nor muse that I commence the rhyme
Far distant 'mid the wrecks of time.
The mystic tale, by bard and sage,
Is handed down from Merlin's age."

X.

LYULPH'S TALE.

King Arthur has ridden from merry Carlisle,
When pentecost was o'er;
He journeyed like errant knight the while,
And sweetly the summer sun did smile
On mountain, moss, and moor.
Above his solitary track
Rose Glaramara's ridgy back,
Amid whose yawning gulfs the sun
Cast umbered radiance red and dun,
Though never sun-beam could discern
The surface of that sable tarn,[6]
In whose black mirror you may spy
The stars, while noontide lights the sky.
The gallant king, he skirted still
The margin of that mighty hill;
Rocks upon rocks incumbent hung,
And torrents, down the gullies flung,
Join'd the rude river that brawl'd on,
Recoiling now from crag and stone,
Now diving deep from human ken,
And raving down its darksome glen.
The monarch judged this desert wild,
With such romantic ruin piled,
Was theatre by Nature's hand
For feat of high achievement plann'd.

XI.

O rather he chose, that monarch bold,
On vent'rous quest to ride,
In plate and mail, by wood and wold,
Than, with ermine trapp'd and cloth of gold,
In princely bower to bide;
The bursting crash of a foeman's spear,
As it shiver'd against his mail,
Was merrier music to his ear
Than courtier's whisper'd tale:
And the clash of Caliburn more dear,

When on the hostile casque it rung,
Than all the lays
To their monarch's praise
That the harpers of Reged sung.
He loved better to rest by wood or river,
Than in bower of his bride, dame Guenever;
For he left that lady so lovely of cheer,
To follow adventures of danger and fear;
And the frank hearted monarch full little did wot,
That she smiled, in his absence, on brave Lancelot.

XII.

He rode, till over down and dell
The shade more broad and deeper fell;
And though around the mountain's head
Flow'd streams of purple, and gold, and red,
Dark at the base, unblest by beam,
Frown'd the black rocks, and roar'd the stream.
With toil the king his way pursued
By lonely Threlkeld's waste and wood,
Till on his course obliquely shone
The narrow valley of SAINT JOHN,
Down sloping to the western sky,
Where lingering sun-beams love to lie.
Right glad to feel those beams again,
The king drew up his charger's rein;
With gauntlet raised he skreen'd his sight,
As dazzled with the level light,
And, from beneath his glove of mail,
Scann'd at his ease the lovely vale,
While 'gainst the sun his armour bright
Gleam'd ruddy like the beacon's light.

XIII.

Paled in by many a lofty hill,
The narrow dale lay smooth and still,
And, down its verdant bosom led,
A winding brooklet found its bed.
But, midmost of the vale, a mound
Arose, with airy turrets crown'd,
Buttress and rampire's circling bound,
And mighty keep and tower;
Seem'd some primeval giant's hand
The castle's massive walls had plann'd,
A ponderous bulwark, to withstand
Ambitious Nimrod's power.
Above the moated entrance slung,
The balanced draw-bridge trembling hung,
As jealous of a foe;
Wicket of oak, as iron hard,
With iron studded, clenched, and barr'd,
And prong'd portcullis, joined to guard
The gloomy pass below.
But the gray walls no banners crown'd,
Upon the watch tower's airy round
No warder stood his horn to sound,
No guard beside the bridge was found,
And, where the Gothic gateway frown'd,
Glanced neither bill nor bow.

XIV.

Beneath the castle's gloomy pride,
In ample round did Arthur ride
Three times; nor living thing he spied,
Nor heard a living sound,
Save that, awakening from her dream,
The owlet now began to scream,
In concert with the rushing stream,
That washed the battled mound.
He lighted from his goodly steed,
And he left him to graze on bank and mead;
And slowly he climbed the narrow way,
That reached the entrance grim and gray,
And he stood the outward arch below,
And his bugle horn prepar'd to blow,
In summons blith and bold,
Deeming to rouse from iron sleep
The guardian of this dismal keep,
Which well he guess'd the hold
Of wizard stern, or goblin grim,
Or pagan of gigantic limb,
The tyrant of the weld.

XV.

The ivory bugle's golden tip
Twice touched the monarch's manly lip,
And twice his hand withdrew.
Think not but Arthur's heart was good!
His shield was cross'd by the blessed rood,
Had a pagan host before him stood,
He had charged them through and through;
Yet the silence of that ancient place
Sunk on his heart, and he paused a space
Ere yet his horn he blew.
But, instant as its larum rung,
The castle-gate was open flung,
Portcullis rose with crashing groan,
Full harshly up its groove of stone;
The balance beams obeyed the blast,
And down the trembling draw-bridge east;
The vaulted arch before him lay,
With nought to bar the gloomy way,
And onward Arthur paced, with hand
On Caliburn's resistless brand.

XVI.

A hundred torches, flashing bright,
Dispelled at once the gloomy night
That loured along the walls,
And showed the king's astonished sight
The inmates of the halls.
Nor wizard stern, nor goblin grim,
Nor giant huge of form and limb,
Nor heathen knight was there;
But the cressets, which odours flung aloft,
Showed, by their yellow light and soft,
A band of damsels fair.
Onward they came, like summer wave
That dances to the shore;
An hundred voices welcome gave,
And welcome o'er and o'er!
An hundred lovely hands assail
The bucklers of the monarch's mail,
And busy laboured to unhasp
Rivet of steel and iron clasp.
One wrapp'd him in a mantle fair,
And one flung odours on his hair;
His short curled ringlets one smooth'd down,
One wreathed them with a myrtle crown.
A bride, upon her wedding day,
Was tended ne'er by troop so gay.

XVII.

Loud laughed they all,—the king, in vain,
With questions tasked the giddy train;
Let him entreat, or crave, or call,
'Twas one reply,—loud laughed they all.
Then o'er him mimic chains they fling,
Framed of the fairest flowers of spring.
While some their gentle force unite,
Onward to drag the wondering knight,
Some, bolder, urge his pace with blows,
Dealt with the lily or the rose.
Behind him were in triumph borne
The warlike arms he late had worn,
Four of the train combined to rear
The terrors of Tintagel's spear;[7]

Two, laughing at their lack of strength,
Dragg'd Caliburn in cumbrous length;[8]
One, while she aped a martial stride,
Placed on her brows the helmet's pride,
Then scream'd, 'twixt laughter and surprise,
To feel its depth o'erwhelm her eyes.
With revel-shout and triumph-song,
Thus gayly marched the giddy throng.

XVIII.

Through many a gallery and hall
They led, I ween, their royal thrall;
At length, beneath a fair arcade
Their march and song at once they staid.
The eldest maiden of the band,
(The lovely maid was scarce eighteen,)
Raised, with imposing air, her hand,
And reverend silence did command,
On entrance of their queen;
And they were mute.—But as a glance
They steal on Arthur's countenance,
Bewildered with surprise,
Their smothered mirth again 'gan speak,
In archly dimpled chin and cheek,
And laughter-lighted eyes.

XIX.

The attributes of those high days
Now only live in minstrel lays,
For nature, now exhausted, still
Was then profuse of good and ill.
Strength was gigantic, valour high,
And wisdom soar'd beyond the sky,
And beauty had such matchless beam,
As lights not now a lover's dream.
Yet, e'en in that romantic age,
Ne'er were such charms by mortal seen
As Arthur's dazzled eyes engage,
When forth on that enchanted stage,
With glittering train of maid and page,
Advanced the castle's queen!
While up the hall she slowly passed,
Her dark eye on the king she cast,
That flash'd expression strong;
The longer dwelt that lingering look,
Her cheek the livelier colour took,
And scarce the shame-faced king could brook
The gaze that lasted long.
A sage, who had that look espied,
Where kindling passion strove with pride,
Had whisper'd, "Prince, beware!
From the chafed tyger rend the prey,
Rush on the lion when at bay,
Bar the fell dragon's blighted way,
But shun that lovely snare!"

XX.

At once, that inward strife suppress'd,
The dame approached her warlike guest.
With greeting in that fair degree,
Where female pride and courtesy
Are blended with such passing art
As awes at once and charms the heart.
A courtly welcome first she gave,
Then of his goodness 'gan to crave
Construction fair and true
Of her light maidens' idle mirth,
Who drew from lonely glens their birth,
Nor knew to pay to stranger worth
And dignity their due;
And then she pray'd that he would rest
That night her castle's honoured guest.
The monarch meetly thanks express'd;
The banquet rose at her behest;
With lay and tale, and laugh and jest,
Apace the evening flew.

XXI.

The lady sate the monarch by,
Now in her turn abashed and shy,
And with indifference seemed to hear
The toys he whispered in her ear.
Her bearing modest was and fair,
Yet shadows of constraint were there,
That show'd an over-cautious care
Some inward thought to hide;
Oft did she pause in full reply,
And oft cast down her large dark eye,
Oft check'd the soft voluptuous sigh,
That heav'd her bosom's pride.
Slight symptoms these; but shepherds know
How hot the mid-day sun shall glow,
From the mist of morning sky;
And so the wily monarch guess'd,
That this assumed restraint express'd
More ardent passions in the breast,
Than ventured to the eye.
Closer he press'd, while beakers rang,
While maidens laughed and minstrels sang,
Still closer to her ear—
But why pursue the common tale?
Or wherefore show how knights prevail
When ladies dare to hear?
Or wherefore trace, from what slight cause
Its source one tyrant passion draws,
Till, mastering all within,
Where lives the man that has not tried,
How mirth can into folly glide,
And folly into sin!

CANTO II.

LYULPH'S TALE, CONTINUED.

I.

Another day, another day,
And yet another, glides away!
The Saxon stern, the pagan Dane,
Maraud on Britain's shores again.
Arthur, of Christendom the flower,
Lies loitering in a lady's bower;
The horn, that foemen wont to fear,
Sounds but to wake the Cumbrian deer,
And Caliburn, the British pride,
Hangs useless by a lover's side.

II.

Another day, another day,
And yet another, glides away!
Heroic plans in pleasure drown'd,
He thinks not of the Table Round;
In lawless love dissolved his life,
He thinks not of his beauteous wife;
Better he loves to snatch a flower
From bosom of his paramour,
Than from a Saxon knight to wrest
The honours of his heathen crest;
Better to wreath, 'mid tresses brown,
The heron's plume her hawk struck down,
Than o'er the altar give to flow
The banners of a Paynim foe.
Thus, week by week, and day by day,
His life inglorious glides away;
But she, that sooths his dream, with fear
Beholds his hour of waking near.

III.

Much force have mortal charms to stay
Our peace in Virtue's toilsome way;

But Guendolen's might far outshine
Each maid of merely mortal line.
Her mother was of human birth,
Her sire a genie of the earth,
In days of old deemed to preside
O'er lovers' wiles and beauty's pride,
By youths and virgins worshipped long,
With festive dance and choral song,
Till, when the cross to Britain came,
On heathen altars died the flame.
Now, deep in Wastdale's solitude,
The downfall of his rites he rued,
And, born of his resentment heir,
He trained to guile that lady fair,
To sink in slothful sin and shame
The champions of the christian name.
Well-skilled to keep vain thoughts alive,
And all to promise, nought to give,
The timid youth had hope in store,
The bold and pressing gained no more.
As wildered children leave their home,
After the rainbow's arch to roam,
Her lovers bartered fair esteem,
Faith, fame, and honour, for a dream.

IV.

Her sire's soft arts the soul to tame
She practised thus--till Arthur came,
Then frail humanity had part,
And all the mother claimed her heart.
Forgot each rule her father gave,
Sunk from a princess to a slave,
Too late must Guendolen deplore,
He, that has all, can hope no more!
Now, must she see her lover strain,
At every turn, her feeble chain;
Watch, to new-bind each knot, and shrink
To view each fast-decaying link.
Art she invokes to nature's aid,
Her vest to zone, her locks to braid;
Each varied pleasure heard her call,
The feast, the tourney, and the ball:
Her storied lore she next applies,
Taxing her mind to aid her eyes;
Now more than mortal wise, and then
In female softness sunk again;
Now, raptured, with each wish complying,
With feigned reluctance now denying;
Each charm she varied, to retain
A varying heart--and all in vain!

V.

Thus in the garden's narrow bound,
Flank'd by some castle's gothic round,
Fain would the artist's skill provide,
The limits of his realm to hide.
The walks in labyrinths he twines,
Shade after shade with skill combines,
With many a varied flowery knot,
And copse and arbour deck the spot,
Tempting the hasty foot to stay,
And linger on the lovely way——
Vain art! vain hope! 'tis fruitless all!
At length we reach the bounding wall,
And, sick of flower and trim-dressed tree,
Long for rough glades and forest free.

VI.

Three summer months had scantly flown,
When Arthur, in embarrassed tone,
Spoke of his liegemen and his throne;
Said, all too long had been his stay,
And duties, which a monarch sway,
Duties unknown to humbler men,
Must tear her knight from Guendolen.—
She listen'd silently the while,
Her mood express'd in bitter smile;
Beneath her eye must Arthur quail,
And oft resume the unfinish'd tale,
Confessing, by his downcast eye,
The wrong he sought to justify.
He ceased. A moment mute she gazed,
And then her looks to heaven she raised;
One palm her temples veil'd, to hide
The tear that sprung in spite of pride;
The other for an instant press'd
The foldings of her silken vest!

VII.

At her reproachful sign and look,
The hint the monarch's conscience took.
Eager he spoke—"No, lady, no!
Deem not of British Arthur so,
Nor think he can deserter prove
To the dear pledge of mutual love.
I swear by sceptre and by sword,
As belted knight and Britain's lord,
That if a boy shall claim my care,
That boy is born a kingdom's heir;
But, if a maiden fate allows,
To choose that maid a fitting spouse,
A summer day in lists shall strive
My knights,—the bravest knights alive,—
And he, the best and bravest tried,
Shall Arthur's daughter claim for bride."—
He spoke, with voice resolved and high—
The lady deigned him not reply.

VIII.

At dawn of morn, ere on the brake
His matins did a warbler make,
Or stirr'd his wing to brush away
A single dew-drop from the spray,
Ere yet a sunbeam, through the mist,
The castle battlements had kiss'd,
The gates revolve, the draw-bridge falls,
And Arthur sallies from the walls.
Doff'd his soft garb of Persia's loom,
And steel from spur to helmet-plume,
His Lybian steed full proudly trode,
And joyful neighed beneath his load.
The monarch gave a passing sigh
To penitence and pleasures by,
When, lo! to his astonished ken
Appeared the form of Guendolen.

IX.

Beyond the outmost wall she stood,
Attired like huntress of the wood;
Sandall'd her feet, her ancles bare,
And eagle plumage decked her hair;
Firm was her look, her bearing bold,
And in her hand a cup of gold.
"Thou goest!" she said, "and ne'er again
Must we two meet, in joy or pain.
Full fain would I this hour delay,
Though weak the wish—yet, wilt thou stay?-
No! thou look'st forward. Still attend,—
Part we like lover and like friend."—
She raised the cup—"Not this the juice
The sluggish vines of earth produce;
Pledge we, at parting, in the draught
Which genii love!"—she said, and quaff'd;
And strange unwonted lustres fly
From her flushed cheek and sparkling eye.

X.

The courteous monarch bent him low,
And, stooping down from saddle-bow,

Lifted the cup, in act to drink.
A drop escaped the goblet's brink—
Intense as liquid fire from hell,
Upon the charger's neck it fell.
Screaming with agony and fright,
He bolted twenty feet upright—
—The peasants still can show the dint,
Where his hoofs lighted on the flint.—
From Arthur's hand the goblet flew,[1]
Scattering a shower of fiery dew,
That burned and blighted where it fell!
The frantic steed rushed up the dell,
As whistles from the bow the reed;
Nor bit nor rein could check his speed
Until he gained the hill;
Then breath and sinew failed apace,
And, reeling from the desperate race,
He stood, exhausted, still.
The monarch, breathless and amazed,
Back on the fatal castle gazed——
Nor tower nor donjon could he spy,
Darkening against the morning sky;[2]
But, on the spot where once they frowned,
The lonely streamlet brawled around
A tufted knoll, where dimly shone
Fragments of rock and rifted stone.
Musing on this strange hap the while,
The king wends back to fair Carlisle;
And cares, that cumber royal sway,
Wore memory of the past away.

XI.

Full fifteen years, and more, were sped,
Each brought new wreaths to Arthur's head.
Twelve bloody fields, with glory fought,
The Saxons to subjection brought;[3]
Rython, the mighty giant, slain
By his good brand, relieved Bretagne;
The Pictish Gillamore in fight,
And Roman Lucius, owned his might;
And wide were through the world renowned
The glories of his Table Round.
Each knight, who sought adventurous fame,
To the bold court of Britain came,
And all who suffered causeless wrong,
From tyrant proud or faitour strong,
Sought Arthur's presence to complain,
Nor there for aid implored in vain.

XII.

For this the king, with pomp and pride,
Held solemn court at Whitsuntide,
And summoned prince and peer,
All who owed homage for their land,
Or who craved knighthood from his hand,
Or who had succour to demand,
To come from far and near.
At such high tide, where glee and game
Mingled with feats of martial fame,
For many a stranger champion came
In lists to break a spear;
And not a knight of Arthur's host,
Save that he trod some foreign coast,
But at this feast of Pentecost
Before him must appear.—
Ah, minstrels! when the Table Round
Arose, with all its warriors crowned,
There was a theme for bards to sound
In triumph to their string!
Five hundred years are past and gone,
But Time shall draw his dying groan,
Ere he behold the British throne
Begirt with such a ring!

XIII.

The heralds named the appointed spot,
As Caerleon or Camelot,
Or Carlise fair and free.
At Penrith, now, the feast was set,
And in fair Eamont's vale were met
The flower of chivalry.
There Galaad sate with manly grace,
Yet maiden meekness in his face;
There Morolt of the iron mace,[4]
And love-lorn Tristrem there:
And Dinadam with lively glance,
And Lanval with the fairy lance,
And Mordred with his look askance
Brunor and Bevidere.
Why should I tell of numbers more?
Sir Cay, sir Banier, and sir Bore,
Sir Carodac the keen,
The gentle Gawain's courteous lore,
Hector de Mares of Pellinore,
And Lancelot, that evermore
Look'd stol'n-wise on the queen.[5]

XIV.

When wine and mirth did most abound,
And harpers play'd their blithest round,
A shrilly trumpet shook the ground,
And marshals cleared the ring,
A maiden, on a palfrey white,
Heading a band of damsels bright,
Paced through the circle, to alight
And kneel before the king.
Arthur, with strong emotion, saw
Her graceful boldness check'd by awe,
Her dress like huntress of the wold,
Her bow and baldrick trapped with gold,
Her sandall'd feet, her ancles bare,
And the eagle plume that deck'd her hair.
Graceful her veil she backward flung——
The king, as from his seat he sprung,
Almost cried, "Guendolen!"
But 'twas a face more frank and wild,
Betwixt the woman and the child,
Where less of magic beauty smiled
Than of the race of men;
And in the forehead's haughty grace,
The lines of Britain's royal race,
Pendragon's, you might ken.

XV.

Faltering, yet gracefully, she said—
"Great prince! behold an orphan maid,
In her departed mother's name,
A father's vowed protection claim!
The vow was sworn in desert lone,
In the deep valley of saint John."—
At once the king the suppliant raised,
And kissed her brow, her beauty praised;
His vow, he said, should well be kept,
Ere in the sea the sun was dipp'd;
Then, conscious, glanced upon his queen:
But she, unruffled at the scene,
Of human frailty construed mild,
Looked upon Lancelot, and smiled.

XVI.

"Up! up! each knight of gallant crest!
Take buckler, spear, and brand!
He that to-day shall bear him best,
Shall win my Gyneth's hand.
And Arthur's daughter, when a bride,
Shall bring a noble dower;
Both fair Strath-Clyde and Reged wide,
And Carlisle town and tower."—

Then might you hear each valiant knight,
To page and squire that cried,
"Bring my armour bright, and my courser wight!
'Tis not each day that a warrior's might
May win a royal bride."—
Then cloaks and caps of maintenance
In haste aside they fling;
The helmets glance, and gleams the lance,
And the steel-weaved hauberks ring,
Small care had they of their peaceful array,
They might gather in that wolde:
For brake and bramble glittered gay,
With pearls and cloth of gold.

XVII.

Within trumpet-sound of the Table Round
Were fifty champions free,
And they all arise to fight that prize,—
They all arise, but three.
Nor love's fond troth, nor wedlock's oath,
One gallant could withhold,
For priests will allow of a broken vow,
For penance or for gold.
But sigh and glance from ladies bright
Among the troop were thrown,
To plead their right, and true-love plight,
And plain of honour flown.
The knights they busied them so fast,
With buckling spur and belt,
That sigh and look by ladies cast,
Were neither seen nor felt.
From pleading or upbraiding glance,
Each gallant turns aside,
And only thought, "If speeds my lance,
A queen becomes my bride!
She has fair Strath-Clyde, and Reged wide,
And Carlisle tower and town;
She is the loveliest maid, beside,
That ever heir'd a crown."—
So in haste their coursers they bestride,
And strike their visors down.

XVIII.

The champions, arm'd in martial sort,
Have throng'd into the list,
And but three knights of Arthur's court
Are from the tourney miss'd.
And still these lovers' fame survives
For faith so constant shown,
There were two who lov'd their neighbours' wives
And one who loved his own.[6]
The first was Lancelot de Lac,
The second Tristrem bold,
The third was valiant Carodac,
Who won the cup of gold,[7]
What time, of all king Arthur's crew
(Thereof came jeer and laugh,)
He, as the mate of lady true,
Alone the cup could quaff.
Though envy's tongue would fain surmise,
That, but for very shame,
Sir Carodac, to fight that prize,
Had given both cup and dame.
Yet, since but one of that fair court
Was true to wedlock's shrine,
Brand him who will with base report,
He shall be free from mine.

XIX.

Now caracol'd the steeds in air,
Now plumes and pennons wanton'd fair,
As all around the lists so wide
In panoply the champions ride.
King Arthur saw, with startled eye,
The flower of chivalry march by,
The bulwark of the christian creed,
The kingdom's shield in hour of need.
Too late he thought him of the wo
Might from their civil conflict flow:
For well he knew they would not part
Till cold was many a gallant heart.
His hasty vow he 'gan to rue,
And Gyneth then apart he drew;
To her his leading-staff resign'd,
But added caution grave and kind.

XX.

"Thou see'st, my child, as promise-bound,
I bid the trump for tourney sound,
Take thou my warder, as the queen
And umpire of the martial scene;
But mark thou this:—as beauty bright,
Is polar star to valiant knight,
As at her word his sword he draws,
His fairest guerdon her applause,
So gentle maid should never ask
Of knighthood vain and dangerous task·
And Beauty's eye should ever be
Like the twin stars that sooth the sea,
And Beauty's breath should whisper peace,
And bid the storm of battle cease.
I tell thee this, lest all too far
These knights urge tourney into war.
Blith at the trumpet let them go,
And fairly counter blow for blow;
No striplings these, who succour need
For a razed helm or fallen steed.
But, Gyneth, when the strife grows warm
And threatens death or deadly harm,
Thy sire entreats, thy king commands,
Thou drop the warder from thy hands.
Trust thou thy father with thy fate,
Doubt not he choose thee fitting mate:
Nor be it said, through Gyneth's pride
A rose of Arthur's chaplet died."—

XXI.

A proud and discontented glow
O'er shadowed Gyneth's brow of snow;
She put the warder by:—
"Reserve thy boon, my liege," she said,
"Thus chaffered down and limited,
Debased and narrowed, for a maid
Of less degree than I.
No petty chief, but holds his heir
At a more honoured price and rare
Than Britain's king holds me!
Although the sun-burn'd maid, for dower,
Has but her father's rugged tower,
His barren hill and lea.
King Arthur swore, 'by crown and sword,
'As belted knight, and Britain's lord,
'That a whole summer's day should strive
'His knights, the bravest knights alive!'
Recal thine oath! and to her glen
Poor Gyneth can return agen:
Not on thy daughter will the stain,
That soils thy sword and crown, remain.
But think not she will e'er be bride
Save to the bravest, proved and tried;
Pendragon's daughter will not fear
For clashing sword or splintered spear,
Nor shrink though blood should flow;
And all too well sad Guendolen
Hath taught the faithlessness of men,
That child of hers should pity, when
Their meed they undergo."—

XXII.

He frowned and sighed, the monarch bold:—
" I give—what I may not withhold;
For, not for danger, dread, or death,
Must British Arthur break his faith.
Too late I mark, thy mother's art
Hath taught thee this relentless part.
I blame her not, for she had wrong,
But not to these my faults belong.
Use, then, the warder as thou wilt;
But trust me that, if life be spilt,
In Arthur's love, in Arthur's grace,
Gyneth shall lose a daughter's place."—
With that he turn'd his head aside,
Nor brooked to gaze upon her pride,
As, with the truncheon raised, she sate
The arbitress of mortal fate;
Nor brooked to mark, in ranks disposed,
How the bold champions stood opposed;
For shrill the trumpet-flourish fell
Upon his ear like passing bell!
Then first from sight of martial fray
Did Britain's hero turn away.

XXIII.

But Gyneth heard the clangor high,
As hears the hawk the partridge-cry.
Oh, blame her not! the blood was hers,
That at the trumpet's summons stirs!—
And e'en the gentlest female eye
Might the brave strife of chivalry
Awhile untroubled view;
So well accomplished was each knight,
To strike and to defend in fight,
Their meeting was a goodly sight,
While plate and mail held true.
The lists with painted plumes were strown,
Upon the wind at random thrown,
But helm and breast-plate bloodless shone;
It seemed their feathered crests alone
Should this encounter rue.
And ever, as the combat grows,
The trumpet's cheery voice arose,
Like lark's shrill song the flourish flows,
Heard while the gale of April blows
The merry greenwood through.

XXIV.

But soon to earnest grew their game,
The spears drew blood, the swords struck flame,
And, horse and man, to ground there came
Knights who shall rise no more!
Gone was the pride the war that graced,
Gay shields were cleft, and crests defaced,
And steel coats riven, and helms unbraced,
And pennons streamed with gore.
Gone, too, were fence and fair array,
And desperate strength made deadly way
At random through the bloody fray,
And blows were dealt with head-long sway,
Unheeding where they fell;
And now the trumpet's clamours seem
Like the shrill sea-bird's wailing scream,
Heard o'er the whirlpool's gulfing stream,
The sinking seaman's knell!

XXV.

Seemed in this dismal hour, that Fate
Would Camlan's ruin antedate,
And spare dark Mordred's crime;
Already gasping on the ground
Lie twenty of the Table Round,
Of chivalry the prime.
Arthur, in anguish, tore away
From head and beard his tresses gray,
And she, proud Gyneth, felt dismay,
And quaked with ruth and fear;
But still she deem'd her mother's shade
Hung o'er the tumult, and forbade
The sign that had the slaughter staid,
And chid the rising tear.
Then Brunor, Taulus, Mador, fell,
Helias the White, and Lionel,
And many a champion more;
Rochemont and Dinadam are down,
And Ferrand of the Forest Brown
Lies gasping in his gore.
Vanoc, by mighty Morolt press'd
Even to the confines of the list,
Young Vanoc of the beardless face,
(Fame spoke the youth of Merlin's race,)
O'erpowered at Gyneth's footstool bled,
His heart's blood died her sandals red.
But then the sky was overcast,
Then howled at once a whirlwind's blast,
And, rent by sudden throes,
Yawn'd in mid lists the quaking earth,
And from the gulf,—tremendous birth!
The form of Merlin rose.

XXVI.

Sternly the wizard prophet eyed
The dreary lists with slaughter dyed,
And sternly raised his hand:—
" Madmen," he said, " your strife forbear!
And thou, fair cause of mischief, hear
The doom thy fates demand!
Long shall close in stony sleep
Eyes for ruth that would not weep;
Iron lethargy shall seal
Heart that pity scorned to feel.
Yet, because thy mother's art
Warp'd thine unsuspicious heart,
And for love of Arthur's race,
Punishment is blent with grace,
Thou shalt bear thy penance lone,
In the valley of saint John,
And this weird* shall overtake thee;—
Sleep, until a knight shall wake thee,
For feats of arms as far renowned
As warrior of the Table Round.
Long endurance of thy slumber
Well may teach the world to number
All their woes from Gyneth's pride,
When the Red Cross champions died."—

XXVII.

As Merlin speaks, on Gyneth's eye
Slumber's load begins to lie;
Fear and anger vainly strive
Still to keep its light alive.
Twice, with effort and with pause,
O'er her brow her hand she draws;
Twice her strength in vain she tries,
From the fatal chair to rise;
Merlin's magic doom is spoken,
Vanoc's death must now be wroken.
Slow the dark-fringed eye-lids fall,
Curtaining each azure ball,
Slowly as on summer eves
Violets fold their dusky leaves.
The weighty baton of command
Now bears down her sinking hand,
On her shoulder droops her head;
Net of pearl and golden thread,

* Doom.

Bursting, gave her locks to flow
O'er her arm and breast of snow.
And so lovely seem'd she there,
Spell-bound in her ivory chair,
That her angry sire, repenting,
Craved stern Merlin for relenting,
And the champions, for her sake,
Would again the contest wake;
Till, in necromantic night,
Gyneth vanish'd from their sight.

XXVIII.

Still she bears her weird alone,
In the valley of saint John;
And her semblance oft will seem
Mingling in a champion's dream,
Of her weary lot to plain,
And crave his aid to burst her chain.
While her wondrous tale was new,
Warriors to her rescue drew,
East and west, and south and north,
From the Liffey, Thames, and Forth.
Most have sought in vain the glen,
Tower nor castle could they ken;
Not at every time or tide,
Nor by every eye, descried.
Fast and vigil must be borne,
Many a night in watching worn,
Ere an eye of mortal powers
Can discern those magic towers.
Of the persevering few,
Some from hopeless task withdrew,
When they read the dismal threat
Graved upon the gloomy gate.
Few have braved the yawning door,
And those few return'd no more.
In the lapse of time forgot,
Well nigh lost is Gyneth's lot;
Sound her sleep as in the tomb,
Till waken'd by the trump of doom.

END OF LYULPH'S TALE.

I.

Here pause, my tale; for all too soon,
My Lucy, comes the hour of noon.
Already from thy lofty dome
Its courtly inmates 'gin to roam,
And, each, to kill the goodly day
That God has granted them, his way
Of lazy sauntering has sought;
  Lordings and witlings not a few,
Incapable of doing aught,
  Yet ill at ease with nought to do.
Here is no longer place for me;
For, Lucy, thou would'st blush to see
  Some phantom, fashionably thin,
  With limb of lath and kerchief'd chin,
  And lounging gape, or sneering grin,
Steal sudden on our privacy.
And how should I, so humbly born,
Endure the graceful spectre's scorn!
Faith! ill I fear, while conjuring wand
Of English oak is hard at hand.

II.

Or grant the hour be all too soon
For Hessian boot and pantaloon,
And grant the lounger seldom strays
Beyond the smooth and gravell'd maze,
Laud we the gods, that Fashion's train
Holds hearts of more adventurous strain.
Artists are hers, who scorn to trace
Their rules from Nature's boundless grace,
But their right paramount assert
To limit her by pedant art,
Damning whate'er of vast and fair
Exceeds a canvass three feet square.
This thicket, for their *gumption* fit,
May furnish such a happy *bit*.
Bards, too, are hers, wont to recite
Their own sweet lays by waxen light,
Half in the salver's tinkle drown'd,
While the chasse-café glides around!
And such may hither secret stray,
To labour an extempore:
Or sportsman, with his boisterous hollo,
May here his wiser spaniel follow,
Or stage-struck Juliet may presume
To choose this bower for tiring room;
And we alike must shun regard,
From painter, player, sportsman, bard.
Insects that skim in Fashion's sky,
Wasp, blue-bottle, or butterfly,
Lucy, have all alarms for us,
For all can hum and all can buz.

III.

But oh, my Lucy, say how long
We still must dread this trifling throng,
And stoop to hide, with coward art,
The genuine feelings of the heart!
No parents thine, whose just command
Should rule their child's obedient hand;
Thy guardians, with contending voice,
Press each his individual choice.
And which is Lucy's!—Can it be
That puny fop, trimm'd cap-a-pie,
Who loves in the saloon to show
The arms that never knew a foe;
Whose sabre trails along the ground,
Whose legs in shapeless boots are drown'd;
A new Achilles, sure,—the steel
Fled from his breast to fence his heel;
One, for the simple manly grace
That wont to deck our martial race,
Who comes in foreign trashery
  Of tinkling chain and spur,
A walking haberdashery,
  Of feathers, lace, and fur:
In Rowley's antiquated phrase,
Horse-milliner* of modern days.

IV.

Or is it he, the wordy youth,
  So early train'd for statesman's part,
Who talks of honour, faith, and truth,
  As themes that he has got by heart;
Whose ethics Chesterfield can teach,
Whose logic is from Single-speech;
Who scorns the meanest thought to vent,
Save in the phrase of parliament;
Who, in a tale of cat and mouse,
Calls "order," and "divides the house,"
Who "craves permission to reply,"
Whose "noble friend is in his eye;"
Whose loving tender some have reckon'd
A *motion*, you should gladly *second*?

V.

What, neither? Can there be a third,
To such resistless swains preferr'd?—
O why, my Lucy, turn aside,
With that quick glance of injured pride?

* "The trammels of the palfraye pleased his sight,
And the horse-milianere his head with roses dight."
Rowley's Ballads of Charitie.

Forgive me, love, I cannot bear
That alter'd and resentful air.
Were all the wealth of Russel mine,
And all the rank of Howard's line,
All would I give for leave to dry
That dew-drop trembling in thine eye.
Think not I fear such fops can wile
From Lucy more than careless smile;
But yet if wealth and high degree
Give gilded counters currency,
Must I not fear, when rank and birth
Stamp the pure ore of genuine worth?
Nobles there are, whose martial fires
Rival the fame that raised their sires,
And patriots, skill'd through storms of fate
To guide and guard the reeling state.
Such, such there are—if such should come,
Arthur must tremble and be dumb,
Self-exiled seek some distant shore,
And mourn till life and grief are o'er.

VI.

What sight, what signal of alarm,
That Lucy clings to Arthur's arm!
Or is it that the rugged way
Makes beauty lean on lover's stay?
Oh, no! for on the vale and brake,
Nor sight nor sounds of danger wake,
And this trim sward of velvet green
Were carpet for the fairy queen.
That pressure slight was but to tell
That Lucy loves her Arthur well,
And fain would banish from his mind
Suspicious fear and doubt unkind.

VII.

But would'st thou bid the demons fly
Like mist before the dawning sky,
There is but one resistless spell—
Say, wilt thou guess, or must I tell?
'Twere hard to name in minstrel phrase,
A landaulet and four blood-bays,
But bards agree this wizard band
Can but be bound in Northern Land.
'Tis there—nay, draw not back thy hand!—
'Tis there this slender finger round
Must golden amulet be bound,
Which, bless'd with many a holy prayer,
Can change to rapture lovers' care,
And doubt and jealousy shall die,
And fears give place to ecstasy.

VIII.

Now, trust me, Lucy, all too long
Has been thy lover's tale and song.
O why so silent, love, I pray?
Have I not spoke the livelong day?
And will not Lucy deign to say
One word her friend to bless?
I ask but one—a simple sound,
Within three little letters bound,
O let the word be YES!

INTRODUCTION TO CANTO III.

I.

Long loved, long woo'd, and lately won,
My life's best hope, and now mine own!
Doth not this rude and Alpine glen
Recal our favourite haunts agen?
A wild resemblance we can trace,
Though reft of every softer grace,
As the rough warrior's brow may bear
A likeness to a sister fair.

Full well advised our highland host,
That this wild pass on foot be cross'd,
While round Ben-Cruach's mighty base
Wheel the slow steeds and lingering chaise.
The keen old carle, with Scottish pride,
He praised his glen and mountains wide;
An eye he bears for nature's face,
Ay, and for woman's lovely grace.
Even in such mean degree we find
The subtle Scot's observing mind;
For, not the chariot nor the train
Could gape of vulgar wonder gain,
But when old Allan would expound
Of Beal-na-paish* the Celtic sound,
His bonnet doff'd, and bow, applied
His legend to my bonny bride;
While Lucy blush'd beneath his eye,
Courteous and cautious, shrewd and sly.

II.

Enough of him.—Now, ere we lose,
Plunged in the vale, the distant views,
Turn thee, my love! look back once more
To the blue lake's retiring shore.
On its smooth breast the shadows seem
Like objects in a morning dream,
What time the slumberer is aware
He sleeps, and all the vision's air:
Even so, on yonder liquid lawn,
In hues of bright reflection drawn,
Distinct the shaggy mountains lie,
Distinct the rocks, distinct the sky;
The summer clouds so plain we note,
That we might count each dappled spot:
We gaze and we admire, yet know
The scene is all delusive show.
Such dreams of bliss would Arthur draw,
When first his Lucy's form he saw;
Yet sigh'd and sicken'd as he drew,
Despairing they could e'er prove true!

III.

But, Lucy, turn thee now, to view
Up the fair glen our destined way!
The fairy path that we pursue,
Distinguish'd but by greener hue,
Winds round the purple brae,
While Alpine flowers of varied dye
For carpet serve or tapestry.
See how the little runnels leap,
In threads of silver, down the steep,
To swell the brooklet's moan!
Seems that the highland Naiad grieves,
Fantastic while her crown she weaves,
Of rowan, birch, and alder-leaves,
So lovely, and so lone.
There's no illusion there, these flowers,
That wailing brook, these lovely bowers,
Are, Lucy, all our own;
And, since thine Arthur call'd thee wife,
Such seems the prospect of his life,
A lovely path, on-winding still,
By gurgling brook and sloping hill.
'Tis true that mortals cannot tell
What waits them in the distant dell;
But be it hap, or be it harm,
We tread the path-way arm in arm.

IV.

And now, my Lucy, wot'st thou why
I could thy bidding twice deny,

* Beal-na-paish, the Vale of the Bridal.

When twice you pray'd I would again
Resume the legendary strain
Of the bold knight of Triermain?
At length you peevish vow you swore,
That you would sue to me no more,
Until the minstrel fit drew near,
And made me prize a listening ear.
But, loveliest, when thou first didst pray
Continuance of the knightly lay,
Was it not on the happy day
That made thy hand mine own?
When, dizzied with mine ecstasy,
Nought past, or present, or to be,
Could I or think on, hear, or see,
Save, Lucy, thee alone!
A giddy draught my rapture was,
As ever chemist's magic gas.

V.

Again the summons I denied
In you fair capital of Clyde;
My harp—or let me rather choose
The good old classic form—my muse,
(For harp 's an over-scutched phrase,
Worn out by bards of modern days,)
My muse, then—seldom will she wake
Save by dim wood and silent lake.
She is the wild and rustic maid,
Whose foot unsandall'd loves to tread
Where the soft green-sward is inlaid
With varied moss and thyme;
And, lest the simple lily-braid,
That coronets her temples, fade,
She hides her still in greenwood shade,
To meditate her rhyme.

VI.

And now she comes! The murmur dear
Of the wild brook hath caught her ear,
The glade hath won her eye;
She longs to join with each blith rill
That dances down the highland hill,
Her blither melody.
And now, my Lucy's way to cheer,
She bids Ben-Cruach's echoes hear
How closed the tale, my love whilere
Loved for its chivalry.
List how she tells, in notes of flame,
"Child Roland to the dark tower came!"—

CANTO III.

I.

Bewcastle now must keep the hold,
Speir-Adam's steeds must bide in stall,
Of Hartley-burn the bowmen bold
Must only shoot from battled wall;
And Liddesdale may buckle spur,
And Teviot now may belt the brand,
Tarras and Ewes keep nightly stir,
And Eskdale foray Cumberland.
Of wasted field and plundered flocks
The borderers bootless may complain;
They lack the sword of brave De Vaux,
There comes no aid from Triermain.
That lord, on high adventure bound,
Hath wandered forth alone,
And day and night keeps watchful round
In the valley of St. John.

II.

When first began his vigil bold,
The moon twelve summer nights was old,
And shone both fair and full;
High in the vault of cloudless blue,
O'er streamlet, dale, and rock, she threw
Her light composed and cool.
Stretched on the brown hill's heathy breast,
Sir Roland eyed the vale;
Chief, where, distinguished from the rest,
Those clustering rocks upreared their crest,
The dwelling of the fair distress'd,
As told gray Lyulph's tale.
Thus as he lay, the lamp of night
Was quivering on his armour bright,
In beams that rose and fell,
And danced upon his buckler's boss,
That lay beside him on the moss,
As on a crystal well.

III.

Ever he watched, and oft he deemed,
While on the mound the moonlight streamed,
It altered to his eyes;
Fain would he hope the rocks 'gan change
To buttressed walls their shapeless range,
Fain think, by transmutation strange,
He saw gray turrets rise.
But scarce his heart with hope throbb'd high,
Before the wild illusions fly,
Which fancy had conceived,
Abetted by an anxious eye
That longed to be deceived.
It was a fond deception all,
Such as, in solitary hall,
Beguiles the musing eye,
When, gazing on the sinking fire,
Bulwark and battlement and spire
In the red gulf we spy.
For, seen by moon of middle night,
Or by the blaze of noontide bright,
Or by the dawn of morning light,
Or evening's western flame,
In every tide, at every hour,
In mist, in sunshine, and in shower,
The rocks remained the same.

IV.

Oft has he traced the charmed mound,
Oft climbed its crest, or paced it round,
Yet nothing might explore,
Save that the crags so rudely piled,
At distance seen, resemblance wild
To a rough fortress bore.
Yet still his watch the warrior keeps,
Feeds hard and spare, and seldom sleeps,
And drinks but of the well;
Ever by day he walks the hill,
And when the evening gale is chill,
He seeks a rocky cell,
Like hermit poor to bid his bead,
And tell his ave and his creed,
Invoking every saint at need,
For aid to burst the spell.

V.

And now the moon her orb has hid,
And dwindled to a silver thread,
Dim seen in middle heaven,
While o'er its curve careering fast,
Before the fury of the blast,
The midnight clouds are driven.
The brooklet raved, for on the hills
The upland showers had swoll'n the rills,
And down the torrents came;
Muttered the distant thunder dread,
And frequent o'er the vale was spread
A sheet of lightning flame.

De Vaux, within his mountain cave,
(No human step the storm durst brave,)
To moody meditation gave
Each faculty of soul,
Till, lulled by distant torrent sound,
And the sad wind that whistled round,
Upon his thoughts, in musing drown'd,
A broken slumber stole.

VI.

'Twas then was heard a heavy sound,
(Sound strange and fearful there to hear,
'Mongst desert hills, where, leagues around,
Dwelt but the gor-cock and the deer:)
As starting from his couch of fern,
Again he heard, in clangour stern,
That deep and solemn swell;
Twelve times, in measured tone, it spoke
Like some proud minster's pealing clock,
Or city's larum-bell.
What thought was Roland's first when fell,
In that deep wilderness, the knell
Upon his startled ear!—
To slander warrior were I loth,
Yet must I hold my minstrel troth,—
It was a thought of fear.

VII.

But lively was the mingled thrill
That chased that momentary chill;
For Love's keen wish was there,
And eager hope, and valour high,
And the proud glow of chivalry,
That burned to do and dare.
Forth from the cave the warrior rush'd,
Long ere the mountain-voice was hush'd,
That answered to the knell;
For long and far the unwonted sound,
Eddying in echoes round and round,
Was tossed from fell to fell;
And Glaramara answer flung,
And Grisdale-pike responsive rung,
And Legbert heights their echoes swung,
As far as Derwent's dell.

VIII.

Forth upon trackless darkness gazed
The knight, bedeafened and amazed,
Till all was hushed and still,
Save the swollen torrent's sullen roar,
And the knight-blast that wildly bore
Its course along the hill.
Then on the northern sky there came
A light, as of reflected flame,
And over Legbert-head,
As if by magic art controll'd,
A mighty meteor slowly roll'd
Its orb of fiery red;
Thou wouldst have thought some demon dire
Came mounted on that car of fire,
To do his errand dread.
Far on the sloping valley's course,
On thicket, rock, and torrent hoarse,
Shingle and scrae,* and fell and force,†
A dusky light arose:
Displayed, yet altered was the scene,
Dark rock, and brook of silver sheen,
Even the gay thicket's summer green,
In bloody tincture glows.

IX.

De Vaux had marked the sunbeams set,
At eve, upon the coronet
Of that enchanted mound,
And seen but crags at random flung,
That, o'er the brawling torrent hung,
In desolation frown'd.
What sees he by that meteor's lour?—
A bannered castle, keep, and tower,
Return the lurid gleam,
With battled walls and buttress fast,
And barbican* and ballium† vast,
And airy flanking towers, that cast
Their shadows on the stream.
'Tis not deceit; distinctly clear
Crenell‡ and parapet appear,
While o'er the pile that meteor drear
Makes momentary pause;
Then forth its solemn path it drew,
And fainter yet and fainter grew
Those gloomy towers upon the view,
As its wild light withdraws.

X.

Forth from the cave did Roland rush,
O'er crag and stream, through briar and bush;
Yet far he had not sped,
Ere sunk was that portentous light
Behind the hills, and utter night
Was on the valley spread.
He paused perforce,—and blew his horn;
And on the mountain echoes borne
Was heard an answering sound,
A wild and lonely trumpet note,
In middle air it seem'd to float
High o'er the battled mound:
And sounds were heard, as when a guard
Of some proud castle holding ward,
Pace forth their nightly round.
The valiant knight of Triermain
Rung forth his challenge-blast again,
But answer came there none;
And 'mid the mingled wind and rain,
Darkling he sought the vale in vain,
Until the dawning shone;
And when it dawned, that wond'rous sight,
Distinctly seen by meteor-light,
It all had passed away!
And that enchanted mound once more
A pile of granite fragments bore,
As at the close of day.

XI.

Steeled for the deed, De Vaux's heart
Scorned from his venturous quest to part,
He walks the vale once more;
But only sees, by night or day,
That shattered pile of rocks so gray,
Hears but the torrent's roar.
Till when, through hills of azure borne,
The moon renewed her silver horn,
Just at the time her waning ray
Had faded in the dawning day,
A summer mist arose;
Adown the vale the vapours float,
And cloudy undulations moat
That tufted mound of mystic note,
As round its base they close.
And higher now the fleecy tide
Ascends its stern and shaggy side,
Until the airy billows hide
The rock's majestic isle;
It seemed a veil of filmy lawn,
By some fantastic fairy drawn
Around enchanted pile.

* Bank of loose stones. † Water-fall.

* The outer defence of the castle-gate.
† Fortified court.
‡ Apertures for shooting arrows.

XII.

The breeze came softly down the brook,
And, sighing as it blew,
The veil of silver mist it shook,
And to De Vaux's eager look
Renewed that wond'rous view.
For, though the loitering vapour braved
The gentle breeze, yet oft it waved
Its mantle's dewy fold;
And, still, when shook that filmy screen,
Where towers and bastions dimly seen,
And Gothic battlements between
Their gloomy length unroll'd.
Speed, speed, De Vaux, ere on thine eye
Once more the fleeting vision die!—
The gallant knight can speed
As prompt and light as, when the hound
Is opening, and the horn is wound,
Careers the hunter's steed.
Down the steep dell his course amain
Hath rivall'd archer's shaft;
But ere the mound he could attain,
The rocks their shapeless form regain,
And mocking loud his labour vain,
The mountain spirits laugh'd.
Far up the echoing dell was borne
Their wild unearthly shout of scorn.

XIII.

Wroth waxed the warrior.—"Am I then
Fool'd by the enemies of men,
Like a poor hind, whose homeward way
Is haunted by malicious fay?
Is Triermain become your taunt,
De Vaux your scorn? False fiends, avaunt!"
A weighty curtail-axe he bare;
The baleful blade so bright and square,
And the tough shaft of heben wood,
Were oft in Scottish gore embrued.
Backward his stately form he drew,
And at the rocks the weapon threw,
Just where one crag's projected crest
Hung proudly balanced o'er the rest.
Hurl'd with main force, the weapon's shock
Rent a huge fragment of the rock:
If by mere strength 'twere hard to tell,
Or if the blow dissolved some spell,
But down the headlong ruin came,
With cloud of dust and flash of flame.
Down bank, o'er bush, its course was borne,
Crush'd lay the copse, the earth was torn,
Till, staid at length, the ruin dread
Cumber'd the torrent's rocky bed,
And bade the waters' high-swoll'n tide
Seek other passage for its pride.

XIV.

When ceased that thunder, Triermain
Survey'd the mound's rude front again,
And lo! the ruin had laid bare,
Hewn in the stone a winding stair,
Whose moss'd and fractured steps might lend
The means the summit to ascend;
And by whose aid the brave De Vaux
Began to scale these magic rocks,
And soon a platform won,
Where, the wild witchery to close,
Within three lances' length arose
The castle of saint John!
No misty phantom of the air,
No meteor-blazon'd show was there;
In morning splendour, full and fair,
The massive fortress shone.

XV.

Embattled high and proudly tower'd,
Shaded by ponderous flankers, lower'd
The portal's gloomy way.
Though for six hundred years and more,
Its strength had brooked the tempest's roar,
The scutcheon'd emblems that it bore
Had suffered no decay;
But from the eastern battlement
A turret had made sheer descent,
And down in recent ruin rent,
In the mid torrent lay.
Else, o'er the castle's brow sublime,
Insults of violence or of time
Unfelt had passed away.
In shapeless characters of yore,
The gate this stern inscription bore:

XVI.

INSCRIPTION.

Patience waits the destined day,
Strength can clear the cumber'd way.
Warrior, who hast waited long,
Firm of soul, of sinew strong,
It is given to thee to gaze
On the pile of ancient days.
Never mortal builder's hand
This enduring fabric plann'd;
Sign and sigil, word of power,
From the earth raised keep and tower.
View it o'er, and pace it round,
Rampart, turret, battled mound.
Dare no more! to cross the gate
Were to tamper with thy fate;
Strength and fortitude were vain!
View it o'er—and turn again.

XVII.

"That would I," said the warrior bold,
"If that my frame were bent and old,
And my thin blood dropp'd slow and cold
As icicle in thaw;
But while my heart can feel it dance,
Blith as the sparkling wine of France,
And this good arm wields sword or lance,
I mock these words of awe!"—
He said; the wicket felt the sway
Of his strong hand, and straight gave way,
And with rude crash and jarring bray,
The rusty bolts withdraw;
But o'er the threshold as he strode,
And forward took the vaulted road,
An unseen arm with force amain
The ponderous gate flung close again,
And rusted bolt and bar
Spontaneous took their place once more,
While the deep arch with sullen roar
Return'd their surly jar.
"Now closed is the gin and the prey within,
By the rood of Lanercost!
But he that would win the war-wolf's skin,
May rue him of his boast."—
Thus muttering, on the warrior went,
By dubious light down steep descent.

XVIII.

Unbarr'd, unlock'd, unwatch'd, a port
Led to the castle's outer court;
There the main fortress, broad and tall,
Spread its long range of bower and hall,
And towers of varied size,
Wrought with each ornament extreme,
That Gothic art, in wildest dream
Of fancy, could devise.

But full between the warrior's way
And the main portal-arch, there lay
An inner moat;
Nor bridge nor boat
Affords De Vaux the means to cross
The clear, profound, and silent fosse.
His arms aside in haste he flings,
Cuirass of steel and hauberk rings,
And down falls helm, and down the shield,
Rough with the dints of many a field.
Fair was his manly form, and fair
His keen dark eye, and close-curl'd hair,
When,—all unarmed, save that the brand
Of well-proved metal graced his hand,
With nought to fence his dauntless breast
But the close gipon's* under vest,
Whose sullied buff the sable stains
Of hauberk and of mail retains,—
Roland De Vaux upon the brim
Of the broad moat stood prompt to swim.

XIX.

Accouter'd thus he dared the tide,
And soon he reached the farther side,
And entered soon the hold,
And paced a hall, whose walls so wide
Were blazon'd all with feats of pride,
By warriors done of old.
In middle lists they counter'd here,
While trumpets seemed to blow;
And there, in den or desert drear,
They quelled gigantic foe,
Braved the fierce griffon in his ire,
Or faced the dragon's breath of fire.
Strange in their arms, and strange in face,
Heroes they seemed of ancient race,
Whose deeds of arms, and race, and name,
Forgotten long by latter fame,
Were here depicted, to appal
Those of an age degenerate,
Whose bold intrusion braved their fate,
In this enchanted hall.
For some short space the venturous knight
With these high marvels fed his sight;
Then sought the chamber's upper end,
Where three broad easy steps ascend
To an arched portal door,
In whose broad folding leaves of state
Was framed a wicket window-grate;
And, ere he ventured more,
The gallant knight took earnest view
The grated wicket-window through.

XX.

Oh for his arms! Of martial weed
Had never mortal knight such need!—
He spied a stately gallery; all
Of snow-white marble was the wall,
The vaulting, and the floor;
And, contrast strange! on either hand
There stood array'd in sable band
Four maids whom Afric bore;
And each a Lybian tiger led,
Held by as bright and frail a thread
As Lucy's golden hair;
For the leash that bound these monsters dread
Was but of gossamer.
Each maiden's short barbaric vest
Left all unclosed the knee and breast,
And limbs of shapely jet;
White was their vest and turban's fold,
On arms and ancles rings of gold
In savage pomp were set;
A quiver on their shoulders lay,
And in their hand an assagay.
Such and so silent stood they there,
That Roland well nigh hoped
He saw a band of statues rare,
Station'd the gazer's soul to scare;
But, when the wicket oped,
Each grisly beast 'gan upward draw,
Roll'd his grim eye, and spread his claw,
Scented the air, and lick'd his jaw!
While these weird maids, in Moorish tongue,
A wild and dismal warning sung.

XXI.

"Rash adventurer, bear thee back!
Dread the spell of Dahomay!
Fear the race of Zaharak,
Daughters of the burning day!

"When the whirlwind's gusts are wheeling,
Our's it is the dance to braid;
Zarah's sands, in pillars reeling,
Join the measure that we tread,
When the moon hath don'd her cloak,
And the stars are red to see,
Shrill when pipes the sad Siroe,
Music meet for such as we.

"Where the shatter'd columns lie,
Showing Carthage once had been,
If the wandering santon's eye
Our mysterious rites hath seen,—
Oft he cons the prayer of death,
To the nations preaches doom,
'Azrael's brand hath left the sheath!
Moslems think upon the tomb!'

"Our's the scorpion, our's the snake,
Our's the hydra of the fen,
Our's the tiger of the brake,
All that plagues the sons of men.
Our's the tempest's midnight wrack,
Pestilence that wastes by day—
Dread the race of Zaharak!
Fear the spell of Dahomay!"—

XXII.

Uncouth and strange the accents shrill
Rung those vaulted roofs among;
Long it was ere, faint and still,
Died the far resounding song.
While yet the distant echoes roll,
The warrior communed with his soul.
"When first I took this venturous quest,
I swore upon the rood,
Neither to stop, nor turn, nor rest,
For evil or for good.
My forward path, too well I ween,
Lies yonder fearful ranks between;
For man unarm'd, 'tis bootless hope
With tigers and with fiends to cope—
Yet, if I turn, what waits me there,
Save famine dire and fell despair?—
Other conclusion let me try,
Since, choose howe'er I list, I die.
Forward, lies faith and knightly fame;
Behind, are perjury and shame.
In life or death I hold my word."
With that he drew his trusty sword,
Caught down a banner from the wall,
And entered thus the fearful hall.

* A sort of doublet, worn beneath the armour.

XXIII.

On high each wayward maiden threw
Her swarthy arm, with wild halloo!
On either side a tiger sprung—
Against the leftward foe he flung
The ready banner, to engage
With tangling folds the brutal rage;
The right-hand monster in mid air
He struck so fiercely and so fair,
Through gullet and through spinal bone
The trenchant blade hath sheerly gone.
His grisly brethren ramp'd and yell'd,
But the slight leash their rage withheld,
Whilst, 'twixt their ranks, the dangerous road
Firmly, though swift, the champion strode.
Safe to the gallery's bound he drew,
Safe past an open portal through;
And when 'gainst followers he flung
The gate, judge if the echoes rung!
Onward his daring course he bore,
While, mixed with dying growl and roar,
Wild jubilee and loud hurra
Pursued him on his venturous way.

XXIV.

"Hurra, hurra! Our watch is done!
We hail once more the tropic sun.
Pallid beams of northern day,
Farewell, farewell! hurra, hurra!

"Five hundred years o'er this cold glen
Hath the pale sun come round agen;
Foot of man, till now, hath ne'er
Dared to cross the Hall of Fear.

"Warrior! thou, whose dauntless heart
Gives us from our ward to part,
Be as strong in future trial,
Where resistance is denial.

"Now for Afric's glowing sky,
Zwenga wide and Atlas high,
Zaharak and Dahomay!——
Mount the winds! Hurra, hurra!"—

XXV.

The wizard song at distance died
As if in ether borne astray,
While through waste halls and chambers wide
The knight pursued his steady way,
Till to a lofty dome he came,
That flash'd with such a brilliant flame,
As if the wealth of all the world
Were there in rich confusion hurl'd.
For here the gold, in sandy heaps,
With duller earth incorporate sleeps;
Was there in ingots piled, and there
Coined badge of empery it bare;
Yonder huge bars of silver lay,
Dimm'd by the diamond's neighbouring ray,
Like the pale moon in morning day;
And in the midst four maidens stand,
The daughters of some distant land.
Their hue was of the dark-red dye,
That fringes oft a thunder-sky,
Their hands palmetto baskets bare,
And cotton fillets bound their hair;
Slim was their form, their mien was shy,
To earth they bent the humbled eye,
Folded their arms, and suppliant kneel'd,
And thus their proffered gifts reveal'd.

XXVI.

CHORUS.

"See the treasures Merlin piled,
Portion meet for Arthur's child.
Bathe in Wealth's unbounded stream,
Wealth that Avarice ne'er could dream!"

FIRST MAIDEN.

"See these clots of virgin gold!
Severed from the sparry mould,
Nature's mystic alchemy
In the mine thus bade them lie;
And their orient smile can win
Kings to stoop, and saints to sin."—

SECOND MAIDEN.

"See these pearls that long have slept;
These were tears by naiads wept
For the loss of Marinel.
Tritons in the silver shell
Treasured them, till hard and white
As the teeth of Amphitrite."—

THIRD MAIDEN.

"Does a livelier hue delight?
Here are rubies blazing bright,
Here the emerald's fairy green,
And the topaz glows between;
Here their varied hues unite
In the changeful chrysolite."—

FOURTH MAIDEN.

"Leave these gems of poorer shine,
Leave them all, and look on mine!
While their glories I expand,
Shade thine eye-brows with thy hand.
Mid-day sun and diamond's blaze
Blind the rash beholder's gaze."

CHORUS.

"Warrior, seize the splendid store;
Would 'twere all our mountains bore!
We should ne'er, in future story,
Read, Peru, thy perish'd glory!"—

XXVII.

Calmly and unconcern'd the knight
Waved aside the treasures bright:
"Gentle maidens, rise, I pray!
Bar not thus my destined way.
Let these boasted brilliant toys
Braid the hair of girls and boys!
Bid your streams of gold expand
O'er proud London's thirsty land.
De Vaux of wealth saw never need,
Save to purvey him arms and steed,
And all the ore he deigned to hoard
Inlays his helm, and hilts his sword."
Thus gently parting from their hold,
He left, unmoved, the dome of gold.

XXVIII.

And now the morning sun was high,
De Vaux was weary, faint, and dry;
When lo! a plashing sound he hears,
A gladsome signal that he nears
Some frolic water run;
And soon he reached a court-yard square,
Where, dancing in the sultry air,
Tossed high aloft, a fountain fair,
Was sparkling in the sun.
On right and left a fair arcade
In long perspective view displayed
Alleys and bowers, for sun or shade;
But full in front, a door,
Low browed and dark, seem'd as it led
To the lone dwelling of the dead,
Whose memory was no more.

XXIX.

Here stopped De Vaux an instant's space,
To bathe his parched lips and face,
And mark'd, with well-pleased eye,

Refracted on the fountain stream,
In rainbow hues, the dazzling beam
Of that gay summer sky.
His senses felt a mild control,
Like that which lulls the weary soul,
From contemplation high
Relaxing, when the ear receives
The music that the green-wood leaves
Make to the breeze's sigh.

XXX.

And oft in such a dreamy mood,
The half-shut eye can frame
Fair apparitions in the wood,
As if the nymphs of field and flood
In gay procession came.
Are these of such fantastic mould,
Seen distant down the fair arcade,
These maids enlinked in sister-fold,
Who, late at bashful distance staid,
Now tripping from the greenwood shade,
Nearer the musing champion draw,
And, in a pause of seeming awe,
Again stand doubtful now?—
Ah, that sly pause of witching powers!
That seems to say, "To please be ours,
Be yours to tell us how."—
Their hue was of the golden glow
That suns of Candahar bestow,
O'er which in slight suffusion flows
A frequent tinge of paly rose;
Their limbs were fashioned fair and free,
In Nature's justest symmetry,
And wreathed with flowers, with odours graced,
Their raven ringlets reached the waist;
In eastern pomp, its gilding pale
The hennah lent each shapely nail,
And the dark sumah gave the eye
More liquid and more lustrous dye.
The spotless veil of misty lawn,
In studied disarrangement, drawn
The form and bosom o'er,
To win the eye, or tempt the touch,
For modesty showed all too much—
Too much—yet promised more.

XXXI.

"Gentle knight, awhile delay,"
Thus they sung, "thy toilsome way,
While we pay the duty due
To our master and to you.
Over Avarice, over Fear,
Love triumphant led thee here;
Warrior, list to us, for we
Are slaves to Love, are friends to thee.

"Though no treasured gems have we,
To proffer on the bended knee,
Though we boast nor arm nor heart,
For the assagay or dart,
Swains have given each simple girl
Ruby lip and teeth of pearl;
Or, if dangers more you prize,
Flatterers find them in our eyes.

"Stay, then, gentle warrior, stay,
Rest till evening steal on day;
Stay, O stay!—in yonder bowers
We will braid thy locks with flowers,
Spread the feast and fill the wine,
Charm thy ear with sounds divine,
Weave our dances till delight
Yield to languor, day to night.

"Then shall she you most approve,
Sing the lays that best you love,
Soft thy mossy couch shall spread,
Watch thy pillow, prop thy head,
Till the weary night be o'er—
Gentle warrior, would'st thou more?—
Would'st thou more, fair warrior,—she
Is slave to Love, and slave to thee."—

XXXII.

O do not hold it for a crime
In the bold hero of my rhyme,
For stoic look,
And meet rebuke,
He lacked the heart or time;
As round the band of syrens trip,
He kissed one damsel's laughing lip,
And pressed another's proffered hand,
Spoke to them all in accents bland,
But broke their magic circle through;
"Kind maids," he said, "adieu, adieu!
My fate, my fortune, forward lies."
He said, and vanished from their eyes;
But, as he dared that darksome way,
Still heard behind their lovely lay;
"Fair flower of courtesy, depart!
Go, where the feelings of the heart
With the warm pulse in concord move;
Go, where virtue sanctions love!"—

XXXIII.

Downward De Vaux through darksome ways
And ruined vaults has gone,
Till issue from their wilder'd maze,
Or safe retreat, seem'd none;
And e'en the dismal path he strays
Grew worse as he went on.
For cheerful sun, for living air,
Foul vapours rise and mine-fires glare,
Whose fearful light the dangers show'd
That dogg'd him on that dreadful road.
Deep pits, and lakes of waters dun,
They show'd, but show'd not how to shun.
These scenes of desolate despair,
These smothering clouds of poison'd air,
How gladly had De Vaux exchanged,
Though 'twere to face yon tigers ranged!
Nay, soothful bards have said,
So perilous his state seem'd now,
He wished him under arbour bough
With Asia's willing maid.
When, joyful sound! at distance near
A trumpet flourish'd loud and clear,
And, at it ceased, a lofty lay
Seem'd thus to chide his lagging way.

XXXIV.

"Son of honour, theme of story,
Think on the reward before ye!
Danger, darkness, toil despise;
'Tis Ambition bids thee rise.

"He that would her heights ascend,
Many a weary step must wend;
Hand and foot and knee he tries:
Thus Ambition's minions rise.

"Lag not now, though rough the way,
Fortune's mood brooks no delay;
Grasp the boon that's spread before ye,
Monarch's power, and conqueror's glory!"

XXXV.

It ceased. Advancing on the sound,
A steep ascent the wanderer found,
And then a turret stair;

Nor climb'd he far its steepy round
Till fresher blew the air,
And next a welcome glimpse was given,
That cheer'd him with the light of heaven.
At length his toil had won
A lofty hall with trophies dress'd,
Where, as to greet imperial guest,
Four maidens stood, whose crimson vest
Was bound with golden zone.

XXXVI.

Of Europe seem'd the damsels all;
The first a nymph of lively Gaul,
Whose easy step and laughing eye
Her borrow'd air of awe belie;
The next a maid of Spain,
Dark-eyed, dark-haired, sedate, yet bold;
While ivory skin and tress of gold,
Her shy and bashful comrade told
For daughter of Almaine.
These maidens bore a royal robe,
With crown, with sceptre, and with globe,
Emblems of empery:
The fourth a space behind them stood,
And leant upon a harp, in mood
Of minstrel ecstasy.
Of merry England she, in dress
Like ancient British druidess:
Her hair an azure fillet bound,
Her graceful vesture swept the ground,
And, in her hand display'd,
A crown did that fourth maiden hold,
But unadorn'd with gems and gold,
Of glossy laurel made.

XXXVII.

At once to brave De Vaux knelt down
These foremost maidens three,
And proffer'd sceptre, robe, and crown,
Liegedom and seignorie
O'er many a region wide and fair,
Destined, they said, for Arthur's heir;
But homage would he none:—
"Rather," he said, "De Vaux would ride,
A warder of the border side,
In plate and mail, than, robed in pride,
A monarch's empire own;
Rather, far rather, would he be
A free-born knight of England free,
Than sit on despot's throne."
So pass'd he on, when that fourth maid,
As starting from a trance,
Upon a harp her finger laid;
Her magic touch the chords obey'd,
Their soul awaked at once!

SONG OF THE FOURTH MAIDEN.

"Quake to your foundations deep,
Stately tower, and banner'd keep,
Bid your vaulted echoes moan,
As the dreaded step they own.
"Fiends that wait on Merlin's spell,
Hear the foot-fall! mark it well!
Spread your dusky wings abroad,
Boune ye for your homeward road.
"It is HIS, the first who e'er
Dared the dismal hall of Fear;
His, who hath the snares defied,
Spread by pleasure, wealth, and pride.
"Quake to your foundations deep,
Bastion huge, and turret steep!
Tremble keep, and totter tower!
This is Gyneth's waking hour."—

XXXVIII.

Thus while she sung, the venturous knight
Has reach'd a bower, where milder light
Through crimson curtains fell;
Such soften'd shade the hill receives,
Her purple veil when twilight leaves
Upon its western swell.
That bower, the gazer to bewitch,
Had wond'rous store of rare and rich
As ere was seen with eye;
For there by magic skill, I wis,
Form of each thing that living is
Was limn'd in proper dye.
All seem'd to sleep—the timid hare
On form, the stag upon his lair,
The eagle in her eyrie fair
Between the earth and sky.
But what of pictured rich and rare
Could win De Vaux's eye-glance, where,
Deep slumbering in the fatal chair,
He saw king Arthur's child!
Doubt, and anger, and dismay,
From her brow had pass'd away,
Forgot was that fell tourney-day,
For, as she slept, she smiled.
It seemed that the repentant seer
Her sleep of many a hundred year
With gentle dreams beguiled.

XXXIX.

That form of maiden loveliness,
'Twixt childhood and 'twixt youth,
That ivory chair, that sylvan dress,
The arms and ancles bare, express
Of Lyulph's tale the truth.
Still upon her garment's hem
Vanoc's blood made purple gem,
And the warder of command
Cumber'd still her sleeping hand;
Still her dark locks dishevell'd flow
From net of pearl o'er breast of snow;
And so fair the slumberer seems,
That De Vaux impeached his dreams,
Vapid all and void of might,
Hiding half her charms from sight.
Motionless awhile he stands,
Folds his arms and clasps his hands,
Trembling in his fitful joy,
Doubtful how he shall destroy
Long-enduring spell;
Doubtful too, when slowly rise
Dark-fringed lids of Gyneth's eyes,
What these eyes shall tell.
"St. George! St. Mary! can it be,
That they will kindly look on me!"—

XL.

Gently, lo! the warrior kneels,
Soft that lovely hand he steals,
Soft to kiss, and soft to clasp—
But the warder leaves her grasp;
Lightning flashes, rolls the thunder!
Gyneth startles from her sleep,
Totters tower, and trembles keep,
Burst the castle walls asunder!
Fierce and frequent were the shocks,
Melt the magic halls away——
——But beneath their mystic rocks,
In the arms of bold De Vaux,
Safe the princess lay!
Safe and free from magic power,
Blushing like the rose's flower
Opening to the day;

And round the champion's brows was bound
The crown that druidess had wound,
Of the green laurel-bay.
And this was what remain'd of all
The wealth of each enchanted hall,
The garland and the dame:—
But where should warrior seek the meed,
Due to high worth for daring deed,
Except from LOVE and FAME!

CONCLUSION.

I.

My Lucy, when the maid is won,
The minstrel's task, thou know'st, is done;
And to require of bard
That to the dregs his tale should run,
Were ordinance too hard.
Our lovers, briefly be it said,
Wedded as lovers wont to wed,
When tale or play is o'er;
Lived long and blest, loved fond and true,
And saw a numerous race renew
The honours that they bore.
Know, too, that when a pilgrim strays,
In morning mist, or evening maze,
Along the mountain lone,
That fairy fortress often mocks
His gaze upon the castle rocks
Of the valley of saint John;
But never man since brave De Vaux
The charmed portal won.
'Tis now a vain illusive show,
That melts whene'er the sunbeams glow,
Or the fresh breeze hath blown.

II.

But see, my love, where far below
Our lingering wheels are moving slow,
The whiles up-gazing still,
Our menials eye our steepy way,
Marvelling, perchance, what whim can stay
Our steps when eve is sinking gray
On this gigantic hill.
So think the vulgar—Life and time
Ring all their joys in one dull chime
Of luxury and ease;
And O! beside these simple knaves,
How many better born are slaves
To such coarse joys as these,
Dead to the nobler sense that glows
When Nature's grander scenes unclose!
But, Lucy, we will love them yet,
The mountain's misty coronet,
The green-wood and the wold;
And love the more, that of their maze
Adventure high of other days
By ancient bards is told,
Bringing, perchance, like my poor tale,
Some moral truth in fiction's veil:
Nor love them less, that o'er the hill
The evening breeze, as now, comes chill;—
My love shall wrap her warm,
And, fearless of the slippery way,
While safe she trips the heathy brae,
Shall hang on Arthur's arm.

NOTES TO CANTO I.

1. Like Collins, ill-starr'd name!—P. 348.

COLLINS, according to Johnson, "by indulging some peculiar habits of thought, was eminently delighted with those flights of imagination which pass the bounds of nature, and to which the mind is reconciled only by a passive acquiescence in popular traditions. He loved fairies, genii, giants, and monsters; he delighted to rove through the meanders of enchantment, to gaze on the magnificence of golden palaces, to repose by the waterfalls of elysian gardens."

2. ——— the baron of Triermain.—P. 348.

Triermain was a fief of the barony of Gilsland, in Cumberland; it was possessed by a Saxon family at the time of the Conquest, but, "after the death of Gilmore, lord of Tryermaine and Torcrossock, Hubert Vaux gave Tryermaine and Torcrossock to his second son, Ranulph Vaux, which Ranulph afterwards became heir to his elder brother Robert, the founder of Lanercost, who died without issue. Ranulph, being lord of all Gilsland, gave Gilmore's lands to his own younger son, named Roland, and let the barony descend to his eldest son Robert, son of Ranulph. Roland had issue Alexander, and he Ranulph, after whom succeeded Robert, and they were named Rolands successively, that were lords thereof, until the reign of Edward the fourth. That house gave for arms, Vert, a bend dexter, chequey, or and gules."—*Burn's Antiquities of Westmoreland and Cumberland*, vol. ii, p. 482.

This branch of Vaux, with its collateral alliances, is now represented by the family of Braddyl of Conishead priory, in the county palatine of Lancaster; for it appears that, about the time above-mentioned, the house of Triermaine was united to its kindred family Vaux of Caterlen, and, by marriage with the heiress of Delamore and Leybourne, became the representative of those ancient and noble families. The male line failing in John de Vaux, about the year 1665, his daughter and heiress, Mabel, married Christopher Richmond, esq. of Highhead castle, in the county of Cumberland, descended from an ancient family of that name, lords of Corby castle, in the same county, soon after the Conquest, and which they alienated about the 15th of Edward the second, to Andrea de Harcla, earl of Carlisle. Of this family was sir Thomas de Raigemont, (miles auratus,) in the reign of king Edward the first, who appears to have greatly distinguished himself at the siege of Kaerlaveroc, with William baron of Leybourne. In an ancient heraldic poem now extant, and preserved in the British Museum, describing that siege, his arms are stated to be, Or, 2 Bars Gemelles Gules, and a Chief Or, the same borne by his descendants at the present day. The Richmonds removed to their castle of Highhead in the reign of Henry the eighth, when the then representative of the family married Margaret, daughter of sir Hugh Lowther, by the lady Dorothy de Clifford, only child by a second marriage of Henry lord Clifford, great grandson of John lord Clifford, by Elizabeth Percy, daughter of Henry (surnamed Hotspur) by Elizabeth Mortimer, which said Elizabeth was daughter of Edward Mortimer, third earl of Marche, by Phillippa, sole daughter and heiress of Lionel, duke of Clarence.

The third in descent from the above-mentioned John Richmond, became the representative of the families of Vaux, of Triermaine, Caterlen, and Torcrossock, by his marriage with Mabel de Vaux, the heiress of them. His grandson Henry Richmond died without issue, leaving five sisters co-heiresses, four of whom married; but Margaret, who married William Gale, esq. of Whitehaven, was the only one who had male issue surviving. She had a son, and a daughter married to Henry

Curwen of Workington, esq., who represented the county of Cumberland for many years in parliament, and by her had a daughter, married to John Christian, esq., (now Curwen.) John, son and heir of William Gale, married Sarah, daughter and heiress of Christopher Wilson of Bardsea hall, in the county of Lancaster, by Margaret, aunt and co-heiress of Thomas Braddyl, esq. of Braddyl, and Conishead priory, in the same county, and had issue four sons and two daughters:—1st, William Wilson, died an infant; 2d, Wilson, who, upon the death of his cousin, Thomas Braddyl, without issue, succeeded to his estates, and took the name of Braddyl, in pursuance of his will, by the king's sign manual; 3d, William, died young; and 4th, Henry Richmond, a lieutenant-general of the army, married Sarah, daughter of the Rev. R. Baldwin; Margaret married Richard Greaves Townley, esq. of Fulbourne, in the county of Cambridge, and of Bellfield, in the county of Lancaster; Sarah married to George Bigland, of Bigland hall, in the same county.

Wilson Braddyl, eldest son of John Gale, and grandson of Margaret Richmond, married Jane, daughter and heiress of Matthias Gale, esq. of Catgill hall, in the county of Cumberland, by Jane, daughter and heiress of the Rev. S. Bennet, D. D.; and, as the eldest surviving male branch of the families above-mentioned, he quarters, in addition to his own, their paternal coats in the following order, as appears by the records in the college of arms.

1st, Argent, a fess azure, between 3 saltiers of the same, charged with an anchor between 2 lions heads erazed, or,—Gale.

2d, Or, 2 bars gemelles gules, and a chief or,—Richmond.

3d, Or, a fess chequey, or and gules between 9 gerbes gules,—Vaux of Caterlen.

4th, Gules, a fess chequey, or and gules between 6 gerbes or,—Vaux of Torcrossock.

5th, *Argent, a bend chequey, or and gules, for Vaux of Triermain.

6th, Gules, a cross patonce, or,—Delamore.

7th, Gules, 6 lions rampant argent, 3, 2, and 1, —Leybourne.†

3. And his who sleeps at Dunmailraise.—P. 349.

Dunmailraise is one of the grand passes from Cumberland into Westmoreland. It takes its name from a cairn, or pile of stones, erected, it is said, to the memory of Dunmail, the last king of Cumberland.

4. —— Penrith's Table Round.—P. 349.

A circular entrenchment, about half a mile from Penrith, is thus popularly termed. The circle within the ditch is about one hundred and sixty paces in circumference, with openings, or approaches, directly opposite to each other. As the ditch is on the inner side, it could not be intended for the purpose of defence, and it has reasonably been conjectured, that the inclosure was designed for the solemn exercise of feats of chivalry; and the embankment around for the convenience of the spectators.

5. —Mayburgh's mound and stones of power.—P. 349.

Higher up the river Eamont than Arthur's Round Table, is a prodigious inclosure of great antiquity, formed by a collection of stones upon the top of a gently sloping hill, called Mayburgh. In the plain which it incloses there stands erect an unhewn stone of twelve feet in height. Two similar masses are said to have been destroyed during the memory of man. The whole appears to be a monument of druidical times.

6. Though never sunbeam could discern
The surface of that sable tarn.—P. 349.

The small lake called Scales-tarn lies so deeply embosomed in the recesses of the huge mountain called Saddleback, more poetically Glaramara, is of such great depth, and so completely hidden from the sun, that it is said its beams never reach it, and that the reflection of the stars may be seen at mid-day.

7. ——— Tintadgel's spear.—P. 350.

Tintadgel castle, in Cornwall, is reported to have been the birth-place of king Arthur.

8. —— Caliburn in cumbrous length.—P. 351.

This was the name of king Arthur's well-known sword, sometimes also called Excalibar.

NOTES TO CANTO II.

1. From Arthur's hand the goblet flew.—P. 353.

The author has an indistinct recollection of an adventure somewhat similar to that which is here ascribed to king Arthur, having befallen one of the ancient kings of Denmark. The horn in which the burning liquor was presented to that monarch, is said still to be preserved in the Royal Museum at Copenhagen.

2. Nor tower nor donjon could he spy,
Darkening against the morning sky.—P. 353.

——"We now gained a view of the vale of St. John's, a very narrow dell, hemmed in by mountains, through which a small brook makes many meanderings, washing little inclosures of grass-ground, which stretch up the rising of the hills. In the widest part of the dale you are struck with the appearance of an ancient ruined castle, which seems to stand upon the summit of a little mount, the mountains around forming an amphitheatre. This massive bulwark shows a front of various towers, and makes an awful, rude, and Gothic appearance, with its lofty turrets and ragged battlements; we traced the galleries, the bending arches, the buttresses. The greatest antiquity stands characterized in its architecture; the inhabitants near it assert it is an antediluvian structure.

"The traveller's curiosity is roused, and he prepares to make a nearer approach, when that curiosity is put upon the rack by his being assured, that, if he advances, certain genii who govern the place, by virtue of their supernatural art and necromancy, will strip it of all its beauties, and, by enchantment, transform the magic walls. The vale seems adapted for the habitation of such beings; its gloomy recesses and retirements look like haunts of evil spirits. There was no delusion in the report; we were soon convinced of its truth; for this piece of antiquity, so venerable and noble in its aspect, as we drew near, changed its figure, and proved no other than a shaken massive pile of rocks, which stand in the midst of this little vale, disunited from the adjoining mountains, and have so much the real form and resemblance of a castle, that they bear the name of the Castle Rocks of St. John."—*Hutchinson's Excursion to the Lakes*, p. 121.

3. The Saxons to subjection brought.—P. 353.

Arthur is said to have defeated the Saxons in

* Not vert, as stated by Burn.

† This more detailed genealogy of the family of Triermain was obligingly sent to the author, by major Braddyl of Conishead Priory.

twelve pitched battles, and to have achieved the other feats alluded to in the text.

4. There Morolt of the iron mace, &c.—P. 353.

The characters named in the following stanza are all of them, more or less, distinguished in the romances which treat of king Arthur and his Round Table, and their names are strung together according to the established custom of minstrels upon such occasions; for example, in the ballad of the marriage of sir Gawaine:

Sir Lancelot, sir Stephen bolde,
They rode with them that daye,
And, foremost of the companye,
There rode the stewarde Kaye:
Soe did sir Banier, and sir Bore,
And eke sir Garratte keen,
Sir Tristram too, that gentle knight,
To the forest fresh and green.

5. And Lancelot, that evermore
Look'd stol'n-wise on the queen.—P. 353.

Upon this delicate subject hear Richard Robinson, citizen of London, in his assertion of king Arthur:

"But as it is a thing sufficiently apparent that she (Guenever, wife of king Arthur) was beautiful, so it is a thing doubted whether she was chaste, yea or no. Truly, so far as I can with honestie, I would spare the impayred honour and fame of noble women. But yet the truth of the historie pluckes me by the eere, and willeth me not onely, but commandeth me to declare what the ancients have deemed of her. To wrestle or contend with so great authoritie were indeed unto me a controversie, and that greate."—*Assertion of king Arthure.* Imprinted by John Wolfe, London, 1582.

6. There were two who loved their neighbours' wives,
And one who loved his own.—P. 354.

"In our forefathers' tyme, when papistrie, as a standyng poole, covered and overflowed all England, fewe books were read in our tongue, savyng certain bookes of chevalrie, as they said, for pastime and pleasure; which, as some say, were made in the monasteries, by idle monks or wonton chanons. As one for example, *La morte d'Arthure;* the whole pleasure of which book standeth in two speciall poynts, in open manslaughter and bold bawdrye; in which booke they be counted the noblest knightes that do kill most men without any quarrell, and commit fowlest adoulteries by sutlest shiftes; as sir Launcelot, with the wife of king Arthur, his master; sir Tristram, with the wife of king Marke, his uncle; sir Lamerocke, with the wife of king Lote, that was his own aunt. This is good stuffe for wise men to laugh at, or honest men to take pleasure at, yet I know when God's Bible was banished the court, and La Morte d'Arthure received into the prince's chamber."—Ascham's *Schoolmaster.*

7. ———valiant Carodac,
Who won the cup of gold.—P. 354.

See the comic tale of the Boy and the Mantle, in the third volume of Percy's Reliques of Ancient Poetry, from the Breton or Norman original of which Ariosto is supposed to have taken his tale of the Enchanted Cup.

The Vision of Don Roderick.

Quid dignum memorare tuis, Hispania, terris,
Vox humana valet!————CLAUDIAN.

TO JOHN WHITMORE, Esq.

AND TO THE COMMITTEE OF SUBSCRIBERS FOR RELIEF OF THE PORTUGUESE SUFFERERS, IN WHICH HE PRESIDES,

THIS POEM, COMPOSED FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE FUND UNDER THEIR MANAGEMENT, IS RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED, BY WALTER SCOTT.

PREFACE.

The following poem is founded upon a Spanish tradition, particularly detailed in the Notes; but bearing, in general, that Don Roderick, the last Gothic king of Spain, when the invasion of the Moors was impending, had the temerity to descend into an ancient vault, near Toledo, the opening of which had been denounced as fatal to the Spanish monarchy. The legend adds, that his rash curiosity was mortified by an emblematical representation of those Saracens, who, in the year 714, defeated him in battle, and reduced Spain under their dominion. I have presumed to prolong the Vision of the Revolutions of Spain down to the present eventful crisis of the Peninsula; and to divide it, by a supposed change of scene, into Three Periods. The First of these represents the invasion of the Moors, the defeat and death of Roderick, and closes with the peaceful occupation of the country by the victors. The Second Period embraces the state of the Peninsula, when the conquests of the Spaniards and Portuguese in the East and West Indies had raised to the highest pitch the renown of their arms; sullied, however, by superstition and cruelty. An allusion to the inhumanities of the inquisition terminates this picture. The Last Part of the poem opens with the state of Spain previous to the unparalleled treachery of Bonaparte; gives a sketch of the usurpation attempted upon that unsuspicious and friendly kingdom, and terminates with the arrival of the British succours. It may be farther proper to mention, that the object of the poem is less to commemorate or detail particular incidents, than to exhibit a general and impressive picture of the several periods brought upon the stage.

I am too sensible of the respect due to the public, especially by one who has already experienced more than ordinary indulgence, to offer any apology for the inferiority of the poetry to the subject it is chiefly designed to commemorate. Yet I think it proper to mention, that while I was hastily executing a work, written for a temporary purpose, and on passing events, the task was cruelly in-

terrupted by the successive deaths of lord president Blair, and lord viscount Melville. In those distinguished characters, I had not only to regret persons whose lives were most important to Scotland, but also whose notice and patronage honoured my entrance upon active life; and I may add, with melancholy pride, who permitted my more advanced age to claim no common share in their friendship. Under such interruptions, the following verses, which my best and happiest efforts must have left far unworthy of their theme, have, I am myself sensible, an appearance of negligence and incoherence, which, in other circumstances, I might have been able to remove.

Edinburgh, June 24, 1811.

INTRODUCTION.

I.

Lives there a strain, whose sounds of mountain fire
May rise distinguished o'er the din of war,
Or died it with yon master of the lyre,
Who sung beleaguered Ilion's evil star?
Such, Wellington, might reach thee from afar,
Wafting its descant wide o'er ocean's range;
Nor shouts, nor clashing arms, its mood could mar,
All as it swelled 'twixt each loud trumpet-change,
That clangs to Britain victory, to Portugal revenge!

II.

Yes! such a strain, with all o'erpowering measure,
Might melodize with each tumultuous sound,
Each voice of fear or triumph, wo or pleasure,
That rings Mondego's ravaged shores around;
The thundering cry of hosts with conquest crown'd,
The female shriek, the ruined peasant's moan,
The shout of captives from their chains unbound,
The foiled oppressor's deep and sullen groan,
A nation's choral hymn for tyranny o'erthrown.

III.

But we, weak minstrels of a laggard day,
Skilled but to imitate an elder page,
Timid and raptureless, can we repay
The debt thou claim'st in this exhausted age?
Thou givest our lyres a theme, that might engage
Those that could send thy name o'er sea and land,
While sea and land shall last; for Homer's rage
A theme; a theme for Milton's mighty hand—
How much unmeet for us, a faint degenerate band!

IV.

Ye mountains stern! within whose rugged breast
The friends of Scottish freedom found repose;
Ye torrents! whose hoarse sounds have soothed their rest,
Returning from the field of vanquished foes;
Say, have ye lost each wild majestic close,
That erst the choir of bards or druids flung;
What time their hymn of victory arose,
And Cattraeth's glens with voice of triumph rung,
And mystic Merlin harped, and gray-haired Llywarch sung.[1]

V.

O! if your wilds such minstrelsy retain,
As sure your changeful gales seem oft to say,
When sweeping wild and sinking soft again,
Like trumpet jubilee, or harp's wild sway;
If ye can echo such triumphant lay,
Then lend the note to him has loved you long!
Who pious gathered each tradition gray,
That floats your solitary wastes along,
And with affection vain gave them new voice in song.

VI.

For not till now, how oft soe'er the task
Of truant verse hath lightened graver care,
From muse or sylvan was he wont to ask,
In phrase poetic, inspiration fair;
Careless he gave his numbers to the air,—
They came unsought for, if applauses came;
Nor for himself prefers he now the prayer;
Let but his verse befit a hero's fame,
Immortal be the verse!—forgot the poet's name.

VII.

Hark, from yon misty cairn their answer tost;
"Minstrel! the fame of whose romantic lyre,
Capricious swelling now, may soon be lost,
Like the light flickering of a cottage fire;
If to such task presumptuous thou aspire,
Seek not from us the meed to warrior due:
Age after age has gathered son to sire,
Since our gray cliffs the din of conflict knew,
Or, pealing through our vales, victorious bugles blew.

VIII.

"Decayed our old traditionary lore,
Save where the lingering fays renew their ring,
By milk-maid seen beneath the hawthorn hoar,
Or round the marge of Minchmore's haunted spring;[2]
Save where their legends gray-haired shepherds sing,
That now scarce win a listening ear but thine,
Of fends obscure, and border ravaging,
And rugged deeds recount in rugged line,
Of moonlight foray made on Teviot, Tweed, or Tyne.

IX.

"No! search romantic lands, where the near sun
Gives with unstinted boon ethereal flame,
Where the rude villager, his labour done,
In verse spontaneous[3] chants some favoured name;
Whether Olalia's charms his tribute claim,
Her eye of diamond, and her locks of jet;
Or whether, kindling at the deeds of Græme,[4]
He sing, to wild Morisco measure set,
Old Albyn's red claymore, green Erin's bayonet!

X.

"Explore those regions, where the flinty crest
Of wild Nevada ever gleams with snows,
Where in the proud Alhambra's ruined breast
Barbaric monuments of pomp repose:
Or where the banners of more ruthless foes
Than the fierce Moor, float o'er Toledo's fane,
From whose tall towers even now the patriot throws
An anxious glance, to spy upon the plain
The blended ranks of England, Portugal, and Spain.

XI.

"There, of Numantian fire a swarthy spark
Still lightens in the sun-burnt native's eye;
The stately port, slow step, and visage dark,
Still mark enduring pride and constancy.
And, if the glow of feudal chivalry
Beam not, as once, thy nobles' dearest pride,
Iberia! oft thy crestless peasantry
Have seen the plumed Hidalgo quit their side,
Have seen, yet dauntless stood—'gainst fortune fought and died.

XII.

"And cherished still by that unchanging race,
Are themes for minstrelsy more high than thine;

Of strange tradition many a mystic trace,
Legend and vision, prophecy and sign;
Where wonders wild of Arabesque combine
With Gothic imagery of darker shade,
Forming a model meet for minstrel line.
Go, seek such theme!"—The mountain spirit said:
With filial awe I heard—I heard, and I obeyed.

VISION OF DON RODERICK.

I.

Rearing their crests amid the cloudless skies,
And darkly clustering in the pale moonlight,
Toledo's holy towers and spires arise,
As from a trembling lake of silver white.
Their mingled shadows intercept the sight
Of the broad burial-ground outstretched below,
And nought disturbs the silence of the night;
All sleeps in sullen shade, or silver glow,
All save the heavy swell of Teio's ceaseless flow.

II.

All save the rushing swell of Teio's tide,
Or distant heard, a courser's neigh or tramp,
Their changing rounds as watchful horsemen ride,
To guard the limits of king Roderick's camp.
For, through the river's night-fog rolling damp,
Was many a proud pavilion dimly seen,
Which glimmer'd back, against the moon's fair lamp,
Tissues of silk and silver twisted sheen,
And standards proudly pitched, and warders armed between.

III.

But of their monarch's person keeping ward,
Since last the deep-mouth'd bell of vespers toll'd,
The chosen soldiers of the royal guard
Their post beneath the proud Cathedral hold:
A band unlike their Gothic sires of old,
Who, for the cap of steel and iron mace,
Bear slender darts, and casques bedeck'd with gold,
While silver-studded belts their shoulders grace,
Where ivory quivers ring in the broad falchion's place.

IV.

In the light language of an idle court,
They murmured at their master's long delay,
And held his lengthened orisons in sport:—
"What! will Don Roderick here till morning stay,
To wear in shrift and prayer the night away?
And are his hours in such dull penance past,
For fair Florinda's plundered charms to pay?"[5]
Then to the east their weary eyes they cast,
And wished the lingering dawn would glimmer forth at last.

V.

But, far within, Toledo's prelate lent
An ear of fearful wonder to the king;
The silver lamp a fitful lustre sent,
So long that sad confession witnessing:
For Roderick told of many a hidden thing,
Such as are lothly uttered to the air,
When Fear, Remorse, and Shame, the bosom wring,
And Guilt his secret burthen cannot bear,
And Conscience seeks in speech a respite from Despair.

VI.

Full on the prelate's face, and silver hair,
The stream of failing light was feebly rolled;
But Roderick's visage, though his head was bare,
Was shadowed by his hand and mantle's fold.
While of his hidden soul the sins he told,
Proud Alaric's descendant could not brook,
That mortal man his bearing should behold,
Or boast that he had seen, when conscience shook,
Fear tame a monarch's brow, remorse a warrior's look.

VII.

The old man's faded cheek waxed yet more pale,
As many a secret sad the king bewrayed;
And sign and glance eked out the unfinished tale,
When in the midst his faltering whisper staid.
"Thus royal Witiza* was slain,"—he said;
"Yet, holy father, deem not it was I."—
Thus still Ambition strives her crime to shade—
"O rather deem 'twas stern necessity!
Self-preservation bade, and I must kill or die.

VIII.

"And if Florinda's shrieks alarmed the air,
If she invoked her absent sire in vain,
And on her knees implored that I would spare,
Yet, reverend priest, thy sentence rash refrain!
All is not as it seems—the female train
Know by their bearing to disguise their mood:"
But Conscience here, as if in high disdain,
Sent to the monarch's cheek the burning blood—
He stayed his speech abrupt—and up the prelate stood.

IX.

"O hardened offspring of an iron race!
What of thy crimes, Don Roderick, shall I say?
What alms, or prayers, or penance can efface
Murder's dark spot, wash treason's stain away!
For the foul ravisher how shall I pray,
Who, scarce repentant, makes his crime his boast?
How hope Almighty vengeance shall delay,
Unless, in mercy to yon christian host,
He spare the shepherd, lest the guiltless sheep be lost?'"—

X.

Then kindled the dark tyrant in his mood,
And to his brow returned its dauntless gloom;
"And welcome then," he cried, "be blood for blood,
For treason treachery, for dishonour doom!
Yet will I know whence come they, or by whom.
Show, for thou canst—give forth the fated key,
And guide me, priest, to that mysterious room,
Where, if aught true in old tradition be,
His nation's future fate a Spanish king shall see."—[6]

XI.

Ill-fated prince! recal the desperate word,
Or pause ere yet the omen thou obey!
Bethink you spell-bound portal would afford
Never to former monarch entrance-way;
Nor shall it ever ope, old records say,
Save to a king, the last of all his line,
What time his empire totters to decay,
And treason digs, beneath, her fatal mine,
And, high above, impends avenging wrath divine.

XII.

—"Prelate! a monarch's fate brooks no delay;
Lead on!"——The ponderous key the old man took,
And held the winking lamp, and led the way,
By winding stair, dark aisle, and secret nook,

* The predecessor of Roderick upon the Spanish throne, and slain by his connivance, as is affirmed by Rodriguez of Toledo, the father of Spanish history.

Then on an ancient gate-way bent his look;
And, as the key the desperate king essayed,
Low-muttered thunders the cathedral shook,
And twice he stopped, and twice new effort made,
Till the huge bolts rolled back, and the loud hinges brayed.

XIII.

Long, large, and lofty, was that vaulted hall;
Roof, walls, and floor, were all of marble stone,
Of polished marble, black as funeral pall,
Carved o'er with signs and characters unknown.
A paly light, as of the dawning, shone
Through the sad bounds, but whence they could not spy;
For window to the upper air was none;
Yet by that light, Don Roderick could descry
Wonders that ne'er till then were seen by mortal eye.

XIV.

Grim sentinels, against the upper wall,
Of molten bronze, two statues held their place;
Massive their naked limbs, their stature tall,
Their frowning foreheads golden circles grace.
Moulded they seemed for kings of giant race,
That lived and sinned before the avenging flood;
This grasped a sithe, that rested on a mace:
This spreads his wings for flight, that pondering stood,
Each stubborn seemed and stern, immutable of mood.

XV.

Fixed was the right-hand giant's brazen look
Upon his brother's glass of shifting sand,
As if its ebb he measured by a book,
Whose iron volume loaded his huge hand;
In which was wrote of many a falling land,
Of empires lost, and kings to exile driven,
And o'er that pair their names in scroll expand—
"Lo, Destiny and Time! to whom by heaven
The guidance of the earth is for a season given."

XVI.

Even while they read, the sand glass wastes away;
And, as the last and lagging grains did creep,
That right-hand giant 'gan his club upsway,
As one that startles from a heavy sleep.
Full on the upper wall the mace's sweep
At once descended with the force of thunder,
And hurling down at once, in crumbled heap,
The marble boundary was rent asunder,
And gave to Roderick's view new sights of fear and wonder.

XVII.

For they might spy, beyond that mighty breach,
Realms as of Spain in visioned prospect laid,
Castles and towers, in due proportion each,
As by some skilful artist's hand portrayed:
Here, crossed by many a wild sierra's shade,
And boundless plains that tire the traveller's eye;
There, rich with vineyard and with olive-glade,
Or deep embrowned by forests huge and high,
Or washed by mighty streams, that slowly murmured by.

XVIII.

And here, as erst upon the antique stage,
Passed forth the bands of masquers trimly led,
In various forms, and various equipage,
While fitting strains the hearer's fancy fed;
So to sad Roderick's eye in order spread,
Successive pageants filled that mystic scene,
Showing the fate of battles ere they bled,
And issue of events that had not been;
And ever and anon strange sounds were heard between.

XIX.

First shrilled an unrepeated female shriek!
It seemed as if Don Roderick knew the call,
For the bold blood was blanching in his cheek.—
Then answered kettle-drum and atabal,
Gong-peal and cymbal-clank the ear appal,
The Tecbir war-cry, and the Lelies' yell,[7]
Ring wildly dissonant along the hall.
Needs not to Roderick their dread import tell—
"The Moor!" he cried, "the Moor!—ring out the tocsin bell!

XX.

"They come! they come! I see the groaning lands,
White with the turbans of each Arab horde,
Swart Zaarah joins her misbelieving bands,
Alla and Mahomet their battle-word,
The choice they yield, the koran or the sword.—
See how the christians rush to arms amain!—
In yonder shout the voice of conflict roared!
The shadowy hosts are closing on the plain—
Now, God and saint Iago strike, for the good cause of Spain!"

XXI.

"By heaven, the Moors prevail! the christians yield!—
Their coward leader gives for flight the sign!
The sceptred craven mounts to quit the field—
Is not you steed Orelia?—Yes, 'tis mine![8]
But never was she turned from battle-line:—
Lo! where the recreant spurs o'er stock and stone!
Curses pursue the slave and wrath divine!—
Rivers ingulf him!"—"Hush!" in shuddering tone,
The prelate said; "rash prince, yon visioned form's thine own."—

XXII.

Just then, a torrent crossed the flier's course;
The dangerous ford the kingly likeness tried;
But the deep eddies whelmed both man and horse,
Swept like benighted peasant down the tide;
And the proud Moslemah spread far and wide,
As numerous as their native locust band;
Berber and Ismael's sons the spoils divide,
With naked scimitars mete out the land,
And for their bondsmen base the freeborn natives brand.

XXIII.

Then rose the grated Harem, to enclose
The loveliest maidens of the christian line;
Then, menials to their misbelieving foes,
Castile's young nobles held forbidden wine;
Then, too, the holy cross, salvation's sign,
By impious hands was from the altar thrown,
And the deep aisles of the polluted shrine
Echoed, for holy hymn and organ-tone,
The santon's frantic dance, the fakir's gibbering moan.

XXIV.

How fares Don Roderick?—E'en as one who spies
Flames dart their glare o'er midnight's sable woof,
And hears around his children's piercing cries,
And sees the pale assistants stand aloof;
While cruel conscience brings him bitter proof,
His folly, or his crime, have caused his grief,
And, while above him nods the crumbling roof,

He curses earth and heaven—himself in chief—
Desperate of earthly aid, desparing heaven's relief!

XXV.

That sithe-armed giant turned his fatal glass,
And twilight on the landscape closed her wings;
Far to Asturian hills the war-sounds pass,
And in their stead rebeck or timbrel rings;
And to the sound the bell-decked dancer springs,
Bazars resound as when their marts are met,
In tourney light the Moor his jerrid flings,
And on the land, as evening seemed to set,
The imaum's chant was heard from mosque or minaret.

XXVI.

So passed that pageant. Ere another came,
The visionary scene was wrapped in smoke,
Whose sulph'rous wreaths were crossed by sheets of flame;
With every flash a bolt explosive broke,
Till Roderick deemed the fiends had burst their yoke,
And waved 'gainst heaven the infernal gonfalone!
For war a new and dreadful language spoke,
Never by ancient warrior heard or known;
Lightning and smoke her breath, and thunder was her tone.

XXVII.

From the dim landscape roll the clouds away—
The christians have regained their heritage;
Before the cross has waned the crescent's ray,
And many a monastery decks the stage,
And lofty church, and low browed hermitage.
The land obeys a hermit and a knight,—
The genii these of Spain for many an age;
This clad in sackcloth, that in armour bright,
And that was Valour named, this Bigotry was hight.

XXVIII.

Valour was harnessed like a chief of old,
Armed at all points, and prompt for knightly gest;
His sword was tempered in the Ebro cold,
Morena's eagle-plume adorned his crest,
The spoils of Afric's lion bound his breast.
Fierce he stepped forward, and flung down his gage,
As if of mortal kind to brave the best.
Him followed his companion, dark and sage,
As he, my master, sung, the dangerous archimage.

XXIX.

Haughty of heart and brow the warrior came,
In look and language proud as proud might be,
Vaunting his lordship, lineage, fights, and fame,
Yet was that bare-foot monk more proud than he.
And as the ivy climbs the tallest tree,
So round the loftiest soul his toils he wound,
And with his spells subdued the fierce and free,
Till ermined age, and youth in arms renowned,
Honouring his scourge and hair-cloth, meekly kissed the ground.

XXX.

And thus it chanced that Valour, peerless knight,
Who ne'er to king or kaisar veiled his crest,
Victorious still in bull-feast, or in fight,
Since first his limbs with mail he did invest,
Stooped ever to that anchoret's behest;
Nor reasoned of the right, nor of the wrong,
But at his bidding laid the lance in rest,
And wro't fell deeds the troubled world along,
For he was fierce as brave, and pitiless as strong.

XXXI.

Oft his proud galleys sought some new-found world,
That latest sees the sun, or first the morn;
Still at that wizard's feet their spoils he hurled,—
Ingots of ore, from rich Potosi borne,
Crowns by caciques, aigrettes by omrahs worn,
Wrought of rare gems, but broken, rent, and foul;
Idols of gold, from heathen temples torn,
Bedabbled all with blood.—With grisly scowl,
The hermit marked the stains, and smiled beneath his cowl.

XXXII.

Then did he bless the offering, and bade make
Tribute to heaven of gratitude and praise;
And at his word the choral hymns awake,
And many a hand the silver censer sways.
But with the incense-breath these censers raise,
Mix steams from corpses smouldering in the fire;
The groans of prisoned victims mar the lays,
And shrieks of agony confound the quire,
While, 'mid the mingled sounds, the darkened scenes expire.

XXXIII.

Preluding light, were strains of music heard,
As once again revolved that measured sand,
Such sounds as when, for sylvan dance prepared,
Gay Xeres summons forth her vintage band;
When for the light bolero ready stand
The Mozo blith, with gay Muchacha met,[9]
He conscious of his broidered cap and band,
She of her netted locks and light corsette,
Each tiptoe perched to spring, and shake the castanet.

XXXIV.

And well such strains the opening scene became;
For Valour had relaxed his ardent look,
And at a lady's feet, like lion tame,
Lay stretched, full loth the weight of arms to brook;
And softened Bigotry, upon his book,
Pattered a task of little good or ill:
But the blith peasant plied his pruning hook,
Whistled the muleteer o'er vale and hill,
And rung from village-green the merry seguidille.

XXXV.

Gray royalty, grown impotent of toil,
Let the grave sceptre slip his lazy hold,
And careless saw his rule become the spoil
Of a loose female and her minion bold.
But peace was on the cottage and the fold,
From court intrigue, from bickering faction far;
Beneath the chestnut tree Love's tale was told,
And to the tinkling of the light guitar,
Sweet stooped the western sun, sweet rose the evening star.

XXXVI.

As that sea-cloud, in size like human hand
When first from Carmel by the Tishbite seen,
Came slowly overshadowing Israel's land,
Awhile, perchance, bedeck'd with colours sheen,
While yet the sunbeams on its skirts had been,
Limning with purple and with gold its shroud,
Till darker folds obscured the blue serene,
And blotted heaven with one broad sable cloud,
Then sheeted rain burst down, and whirlwinds howled aloud:—

XXXVII.

Even so upon that peaceful scene was poured,
Like gathering clouds, full many a foreign band,

And he, their leader, wore in sheath his sword,
And offered peaceful front and open hand;
Veiling the perjured treachery he planned,
By friendship's zeal and honour's specious guise,
Until he won the passes of the land;
Then, burst were honour's oath, and friendship's ties!
He clutched his vulture-grasp, and called fair Spain his prize.

XXXVIII.

An iron crown his anxious forehead bore;
And well such diadem his heart became,
Who ne'er his purpose for remorse gave o'er,
Or checked his course for piety or shame;
Who, trained a soldier, deemed a soldier's fame
Might flourish in the wreath of battles won,
Though neither truth nor honour decked his name:
Who, placed by fortune on a monarch's throne,
Reeked not of monarch's faith, or mercy's kingly tone.

XXXIX.

From a rude isle his ruder lineage came:
The spark, that, from a suburb hovel's hearth
Ascending, wraps some capital in flame,
Hath not a meaner or more sordid birth.
And for the soul that bade him waste the earth—
The sable land-flood from some swamp obscure,
That poisons the glad husband-field with dearth,
And by destruction bids its fame endure,
Hath not a source more sullen, stagnant, and impure.

XL.

Before that leader strode a shadowy form:
Her limbs like mist, her torch like meteor show'd,
With which she beckoned him through fight and storm,
And all he crushed that crossed his desperate road,
Nor thought, nor feared, nor looked on what he trode;
Realms could not glut his pride, blood could not slake,
So oft as e'er she shook her torch abroad—
It was Ambition bade her terrors wake,
Nor deigned she, as of yore, a milder form to take.

XLI.

No longer now she spurned at mean revenge,
Or staid her hand for conquered foeman's moan,
As when, the fates of aged Rome to change,
By Cæsar's side she crossed the Rubicon;
Nor joyed she to bestow the spoils she won,
As when the banded powers of Greece were tasked
To war beneath the youth of Macedon:
No seemly veil her modern minion asked,
He saw her hideous face, and loved the fiend unmasked.

XLII.

That prelate marked his march—On banners blaz'd
With battles won in many a distant land,
On eagle-standards and on arms he gazed:
"And hopest thou, then," he said, "thy power shall stand?
O thou hast builded on the shifting sand,
And thou hast tempered it with slaughter's flood;
And know, fell scourge in the Almighty's hand!
Gore-moistened trees shall perish in the bud,
And by a bloody death shall die the man of blood!"

XLIII.

The ruthless leader beckoned from his train,
A wan fraternal shade, and bade him kneel,
And paled his temples with the crown of Spain,
While trumpets rang, and heralds cried, "Castile!"[10]
Not that he loved him—No!—in no man's weal,
Scarce in his own, e'er joyed that sullen heart;
Yet round that throne he bade his warriors wheel,
That the poor puppet might perform his part,
And be a sceptred slave, at his stern beck to start.

XLIV.

But on the natives of that land misused,
Not long the silence of amazement hung,
Nor brooked they long their friendly faith abused;
For, with a common shriek, the general tongue
Exclaimed, "To arms!" and fast to arms they sprung.
And Valour woke, that genius of the land!
Pleasure, and ease, and sloth, aside he flung,
As burst the awakening Nazarite his band,
When 'gainst his treacherous foes he clenched his dreadful hand.

XLV.

That mimic monarch now cast anxious eye
Upon the satraps that begirt him round,
Now doffed his royal robe in act to fly,
And from his brow the diadem unbound.
So oft, so near, the patriot bugle wound,
From Tarik's walls to Bilboa's mountains blown,
These martial satellites hard labour found,
To guard awhile his substituted throne—
Light reeking of his cause, but battling for their own.

XLVI.

From Alpuhara's peak that bugle rung,
And it was echoed from Corunna's wall;
Stately Seville responsive war-shout flung,
Grenada caught it in her Moorish hall;
Galicia bade her children fight or fall,
Wild Biscay shook his mountain-coronet,
Valencia roused her at the battle-call,
And foremost still where Valour's sons are met,
Fast started to his gun each fiery miquelet.

XLVII.

But unappalled, and burning for the fight,
The invaders march, of victory secure;
Skilful their force to sever or unite,
And trained alike to vanquish or endure.
Nor skilful less, cheap conquest to ensure,
Discord to breathe, and jealousy to sow,
To quell by boasting, and by bribes to lure;
While nought against them bring the unpractised foe,
Save hearts for Freedom's cause, and hands for Freedom's blow.

XLVIII.

Proudly they march—but O! they marched not forth,
By one hot field to crown a brief campaign,
As when their eagles, sweeping through the north,
Destroyed at every stoop an ancient reign!
Far other fate had heaven decreed for Spain;
In vain the steel, in vain the torch was plied,
New patriot armies started from the slain,
High blazed the war, and long, and far, and wide,[11]
And oft the god of battles blest the righteous side.

XLIX.

Nor unatoned, where Freedom's foes prevail,
Remained their savage waste. With blade and brand,
By day the invaders ravaged hill and dale,
But, with the darkness, the Guerilla band
Came like night's tempest, and avenged the land,

And claimed for blood the retribution due,
Probed the hard heart, and lopped the murderous hand,
And dawn, when o'er the scene her beams she threw,
Midst ruins they had made, the spoilers' corpses knew.

L.

What minstrel verse may sing, or tongue may tell,
Amid the visioned strife from sea to sea,
How oft the patriot banners rose or fell,
Still honoured in defeat as victory!
For that sad pageant of events to be,
Showed every form of fight by field and flood;
Slaughter and ruin, shouting forth their glee,
Beheld, while riding on the tempest-scud,
The waters choked with slain, the earth bedrenched with blood!

LI.

Then Zaragoza—blighted be the tongue
That names thy name without the honour due!
For never hath the harp of minstrel rung,
Of faith so felly proved, so firmly true!
Mine, sap, and bomb, thy shattered ruins knew,
Each art of war's extremity had room,
Twice from thy half-sacked streets the foe withdrew,
And when at length stern Fate decreed thy doom,
They won not Zaragoza, but her children's bloody tomb.[12]

LII.

Yet raise thy head, sad city! Though in chains,
Enthralled thou canst not be! Arise and claim
Reverence from every heart where freedom reigns,
For what thou worshippest!—thy sainted dame,
She of the column, honoured be her name,
By all, whate'er their creed, who honour love!
And like the sacred relics of the flame,
That gave some martyr to the blessed above,
To every loyal heart may thy sad embers prove!

LIII.

Nor thine alone such wreck. Gerona fair!
Faithful to death thy heroes should be sung,
Manning the towers while o'er their heads the air
Swart as the smoke from raging furnace hung;
Now thicker darkening where the mine was sprung,
Now briefly lightened by the cannon's flare,
Now arched with fire-sparks as the bomb was flung,
And reddening now with conflagration's glare,
While by the fatal light the foes for storm prepare.

LIV.

While all around was danger, strife, and fear,
While the earth shook, and darkened was the sky,
And wide destruction stunned the listening ear,
Appalled the heart, and stupified the eye,—
Afar was heard that thrice-repeated cry,
In which old Albion's heart and tongue unite,
Whene'er her soul is up, and pulse beats high,
Whether it hail the wine-cup or the fight,
And bid each arm be strong, or bid each heart be light.

LV.

Don Roderick turned him as the shout grew loud—
A varied scene the changeful vision showed,
For, where the ocean mingled with the cloud,
A gallant navy stemmed the billows broad.
From mast and stern St. George's symbol flow'd,
Blent with the silver cross to Scotland dear;
Mottling the sea their landward barges rowed,
And flashed the sun on bayonet, brand, and spear,
And the wild beach returned the seaman's jovial cheer.

LVI.

It was a dread, yet spirit-stirring sight!
The billows foamed beneath a thousand oars,
Fast as they land the red-cross ranks unite,
Legions on legions brightening all the shores.
Then banners rise, and cannon-signal roars,
Then peals the warlike thunder of the drum,
Thrills the loud fife, the trumpet flourish pours,
And patriot hopes awake, and doubts are dumb,
For, bold in freedom's cause, the bands of ocean come!

LVII.

A various host they came—whose ranks display
Each mode in which the warrior meets the fight,
The deep battalion locks its firm array,
And meditates his aim the marksman light;
Far glance the beams of sabres flashing bright,
Where mounted squadrons shake the echoing mead,
Lacks not artillery breathing flame and night,
Nor the fleet ordnance whirl'd by rapid steed,
That rivals lightning's flash in ruin and in speed.

LVIII.

A various host—from kindred realms they came,
Brethren in arms, but rivals in renown—
For yon fair bands shall merry England claim,
And with their deeds of valour deck her crown.
Hers their bold port, and hers their martial frown,
And hers their scorn of death in freedom's cause,
Their eyes of azure, and their locks of brown,
And the blunt speech that bursts without a pause,
And freeborn thoughts, which league the soldier with the laws.

LIX.

And O! loved warriors of the minstrel's land!
Yonder your bonnets nod, your tartans wave!
The rugged form may mark the mountain band,
And harsher features, and a mien more grave;
But ne'er in battle-field throbbed heart so brave
As that which beats beneath the Scottish plaid,
And when the pibroch bids the battle rave,
And level for the charge your arms are laid,
Where lives the desperate foe that for such onset staid!

LX.

Hark! from yon stately ranks what laughter rings,
Mingling wild mirth with wars stern minstrelsy,
His jest while each blith comrade round him flings,
And moves to death with military glee:
Boast, Erin, boast them! tameless, frank, and free,
In kindness warm, and fierce in danger known,
Rough Nature's children, humorous as she:
And he, yon chieftain—strike the proudest tone
Of thy bold harp, green Isle!—the hero is thine own.

LXI.

Now on the scene Vineira should be shown,
On Talavera's fight should Roderick gaze,
And hear Corunna wail her battle won,
And see Busaco's crest with lightning blaze:—
But shall fond fable mix with hero's praise?
Hath Fiction's stage for Truth's long triumphs room?
And dare her flowers mingle with the bays,
That claim a long eternity to bloom
Around the warrior's crest, and o'er the warrior's tomb?

LXII.

Or may I give adventurous fancy scope,
And stretch a bold hand to the awful veil

That hides futurity from anxious hope,
Bidding beyond it scenes of glory hail,
And painting Europe rousing at the tale
Of Spain's invaders from her confines hurled,
While kindling nations buckle on their mail,
And fame, with clarion-blast and wings unfurl'd,
To freedom and revenge awakes an injured world!

LXIII.

O vain, though anxious, is the glance I cast,
Since fate has marked futurity her own:—
Yet fate resigns to worth the glorious past,
The deeds recorded, and the laurels won,
Then, though the vault of destiny[13] be gone,
King, prelate, all the phantasms of my brain,
Melted away like mist-wreaths in the sun,
Yet grant for faith, for valour, and for Spain,
One note of pride and fire, a patriot's parting strain!

CONCLUSION.

I.

"Who shall command Estrella's mountain-tide
Back to the source, when tempest-chafed to hie?
Who, when Gascogne's vex'd gulf is raging wide,
Shall hush it as a nurse her infant's cry?
His magic power let such vain boaster try,
And when the torrent shall his voice obey,
And Biscay's whirlwinds list his lullaby,
Let him stand forth and bar mine eagles' way,
And they shall heed his voice, and at his bidding stay.

II.

"Else ne'er to stoop, till high on Lisbon's towers
They close their wings, the symbol of our yoke,
And their own sea hath whelmed yon red-cross powers!"
Thus, on the summit of Alverca's rock,
To marshal, duke, and peer, Gaul's leader spoke.
While downward on the land his legions press,
Before them it was rich with vine and flock,
And smiled live Eden in her summer dress;
Behind their wasteful march a reeking wilderness.[14]

III.

And shall the boastful chief maintain his word,
Though heaven hath heard the wailings of the land,
Though Lusitania whet her vengeful sword,
Though Britons arm, and WELLINGTON command!
No! grim Busaco's iron ridge shall stand
An adamantine barrier to his force!
And from its base shall wheel his shattered band,
As from the unshaken rock the torrent hoarse
Bears off its broken waves, and seeks a devious course.

IV.

Yet not because Alcoba's mountain hawk,
Hath on his best and bravest made her food,
In numbers confident, yon chief shall baulk
His lord's imperial thirst for spoil and blood:
For full in view the promised conquest stood,
And Lisbon's matrons, from their walls, might sum
The myriads that had half the world subdued,
And hear the distant thunders of the drum,
That bids the band of France to storm and havoc come.

V.

Four moons have heard these thunders idly rolled,
Have seen these wistful myriads eye their prey,
As famished wolves survey a guarded fold—
But in the middle path a lion lay!
At length they move—but not to battle-fray,
Nor blaze yon fires where meets the manly fight:
Beacons of infamy they light the way,
Where cowardice and cruelty unite,
To damn with double shame their ignominious flight!

VI.

Oh triumph for the fiends of lust and wrath!
Ne'er to be told, yet ne'er to be forgot,
What wanton horrors marked their wrackful path!
The peasant butchered in his ruined cot,
The hoary priest even at the altar shot,
Childhood and age given o'er to sword and flame,
Woman to infamy; no crime forgot,
By which inventive demons might proclaim
Immortal hate to man, and scorn of God's great name!

VII.

The rudest sentinel, in Britain born,
With horror paused to view the havoc done,
Gave his poor crust to feed some wretch forlorn,[15]
Wiped his stern eye, then fiercer grasped his gun.
Nor with less zeal shall Britain's peaceful son,
Exult the debt of sympathy to pay;
Riches nor poverty the task shall shun,
Nor prince nor peer, the wealthy nor the gay,
Nor the poor peasant's mite, nor bard's more worthless lay.

VIII.

But thou—unfoughten wilt thou yield to Fate,
Minion of Fortune, now miscalled in vain?
Can vantage-ground no confidence create,
Marcella's pass, nor Guarda's mountain-chain?
Vain-glorious fugitive![16] yet turn again!
Behold, where, named by some prophetic seer,
Flows Honour's fountain* as fore-doomed the stain
From thy dishonoured name and arms to clear—
Fallen child of Fortune, turn, redeem her favour here!

IX.

Yet, ere thou turn'st, collect each distant aid;
Those chief that never heard the lion roar!
Within whose souls lives not a trace portrayed,
Of Talavera, or Mondego's shore!
Marshal each band thou hast, and summon more;
Of war's fell stratagems exhaust the whole;
Rank upon rank, squadron on squadron pour,
Legion on legion on thy foeman roll,
And weary out his arm—thou canst not quell his soul.

X.

O vainly gleams with steel Agueda's shore,
Vainly thy squadrons hide Assuava's plain,
And front the flying thunders as they roar,
With frantic charge and tenfold odds, in vain![17]
And what avails thee that, for Cameron slain,[18]
Wild from his plaided ranks the yell was given—
Vengeance and grief gave mountain rage the rein,
And, at the bloody spear-point headlong driven,
Thy despot's giant guards fled like the rack of heaven.

XI.

Go, baffled boaster! teach thy haughty mood
To plead at thine imperious master's throne;
Say, thou hast left his legions in their blood,
Deceived his hopes, and frustrated thine own:

* The literal translation of *Fuentes d'Honoro.*

Say, that thine utmost skill and valour shown
By British skill and valour were outvied;
Last say, thy conqueror was WELLINGTON!
And if he chafe, be his own fortune tried—
God and our cause to friend, the venture we'll abide.

XII.

But ye, the heroes of that well-fought day,
How shall a bard, unknowing and unknown,
His mead to each victorious leader pay,
Or bind on every brow the laurels won?
Yet fain my harp would wake its boldest tone,
O'er the wide sea to hail CADOGAN brave;
And he, perchance, the minstrel note might own,
Mindful of meeting brief that Fortune gave
'Mid yon far western isles that hear the Atlantic rave.

XIII.

Yes! hard the task, when Britons wield the sword,
To give each chief and every field its fame:
Hark! Albuera thunders BERESFORD,
And red Barrosa shouts for dauntless GRÆME!
O for a verse of tumult and of flame,
Bold as the bursting of their cannon sound,
To bid the world re-echo to their fame!
For never, upon gory battle-ground,
With conquest's well-bought wreath were braver victors crowned!

XIV.

O who shall grudge him Albuera's bays,
Who brought a race regenerate to the field,
Roused them to emulate their fathers' praise,
Tempered their headlong rage, their courage steeled,[19]
And raised fair Lusitania's fallen shield,
And gave new edge to Lusitania's sword,
And taught her sons forgotten arms to wield—
Shivered my harp, and burst its every chord,
If it forget thy worth, victorious BERESFORD!

XV.

Not on that bloody field of battle won,
Tho' Gaul's proud legions rolled like mist away,
Was half his self-devoted valour shown,—
He gaged but life on that illustrious day;
But when he toiled those squadrons to array,
Who fought like Britons in the bloody game,
Sharper than Polish pike, or assagay,
He braved the shafts of censure and of shame,
And, dearer far than life, he pledged a soldier's fame.

XVI.

Nor be his praise o'erpast who strove to hide
Beneath the warrior's vest affection's wound,
Whose wish heaven for his country's weal denied,
Danger and fate he sought, but glory found.
From clime to clime, where'er war's trumpets sound,
The wanderer went; yet, Caledonia! still
Thine was his thought in march and tented ground:
He dreamed 'mid Alpine cliffs of Athole's hill,
And heard in Ebro's roar his Lyndoch's lovely rill.

XVII.

O hero of a race renowned of old,
Whose war-cry oft has waked the battle swell,[20]
Since first distinguished in the onset bold,
Wild sounding when the Roman rampart fell!
By Wallace' side it rung the southron's knell,
Alderne, Kilsythe, and Tibber owned its fame,
Tummel's rude pass can of its terrors tell;
But ne'er from prouder field arose the name,
Than when wild Ronda learned the conquering shout of GRÆME!

XVIII.

But all too long, through seas unknown and dark,
(With Spenser's parable I close my tale,)
By shoal and rock hath steered my venturous bark,
And landward now I drive before the gale.
And now the blue and distant shore I hail,
And nearer now I see the port expand,
And now I gladly furl my weary sail,
And, as the prow light touches on the strand,
I strike my red-cross flag, and bind my skiff to land.

NOTES.

1. And Cattraeth's glens with voice of triumph rung,
And mystic Merlin harp'd, and gray-hair'd Llywarch sung.—P. 368.

This locality may startle those readers who do not recollect, that much of the ancient poetry, preserved in Wales, refers less to the history of the principality to which that name is now limited, than to events which happened in the north-west of England and south-west of Scotland, where the Britons for a long time made a stand against the Saxons. The battle of Cattraeth, lamented by the celebrated Aneurin, is supposed by the learned Dr. Leyden to have been fought on the skirts of Ettrick forest. It is known to the English reader by the paraphrase of Gray, beginning,

Had I but the torrent's might,
With headlong rage and wild affright, &c.

But it is not so generally known that the champions, mourned in this beautiful dirge, were the British inhabitants of Edinburgh, who were cut off by the Saxons of Deiria, or Northumberland, about the latter part of the sixth century.—*Turner's History of the Anglo-Saxons*, edition 1799, vol. i, p. 222.—Llywarch, the celebrated bard and monarch, was prince of Argood, in Cumberland; and his youthful exploits were performed upon the border, although in his age he was driven into Powys by the successes of the Anglo-Saxons. As for Merlin Wyllt, or the Savage, his name of Caledonian, and his retreat into the Caledonian wood, appropriate him to Scotland. Fordun dedicates the thirty-first chapter of the third book of his Scoto-Chronicon, to a narration of the death of this celebrated bard and prophet near Drummelziar, a village upon Tweed, which is supposed to have derived its name (*quasi Tumulus Merlini*,) from the event. The particular spot in which he is buried is still shown, and appears, from the following quotation, to have partaken of his prophetic qualities:—"There is one thing remarkable here, which is, that the burn, called Pausayl, runs by the east side of the church-yard into the Tweed; at the side of which burn, a little below the church-yard, the famous prophet Merlin is said to be buried. The particular place of his grave, at the root of a thorn-tree, was shown me many years ago, by the old and reverend minister of the place, Mr. Richard Brown; and here was the old prophecy fulfilled, delivered in Scots rhyme, to this purpose:

When Tweed and Pausayl join at Merlin's grave,
Scotland and England shall one monarch have.

"For the same day that our king James the Sixth was crowned king of England, the river Tweed, by an extraordinary flood, so far overflowed its banks, that it met and joined with Pausayl at the said grave, which was never before observed to fall out."—*Pennycuick's Description of Tweeddale*, Edinb. 1715, 4. p. 26.

2. ——where the lingering fays renew their ring,
By milk-maid seen beneath the hawthorn hoar,
Or round the marge of Minchmore's haunted spring.—P. 368.

A belief in the existence and nocturnal revels of the fairies still lingers among the vulgar in Selkirkshire. A copious fountain upon the ridge of Minchmore, called the Cheesewell, is supposed to be sacred to these fanciful spirits, and it was customary to propitiate them by throwing in something upon passing it. A pin was the usual oblation, and the ceremony is still sometimes practised, though rather in jest than earnest.

3. ——verse spontaneous.—P. 368.

The flexibility of the Italian and Spanish languages, and perhaps the liveliness of their genius, renders these countries distinguished for the talent of improvisation, which is found even among the lowest of the people. It is mentioned by Baretti and other travellers.

4. ——the deeds of Græme.—P. 368.

Over a name sacred for ages to heroic verse, a poet may be allowed to exercise some power. I have used the freedom, here and elsewhere, to alter the orthography of the name of my gallant countryman, in order to apprize the southern reader of its legitimate sound;—Graham being, on the other side of the Tweed, usually pronounced as a dissyllable.

5. For fair Florinda's plunder'd charms to pay.—P. 369.

Almost all the Spanish historians, as well as the voice of tradition, ascribe the invasion of the Moors to the forcible violation committed by Roderick upon Florinda, called by the Moors Caba or Cava. She was the daughter of count Julian, one of the Gothic monarch's principal lieutenants, who, when the crime was perpetrated, was engaged in the defence of Ceuta against the Moors. In his indignation at the ingratitude of his sovereign, and the dishonour of his daughter, count Julian forgot the duties of a christian and a patriot, and, forming an alliance with Musa, then the caliph's lieutenant in Africa, he countenanced the invasion of Spain by a body of Saracens and Africans, commanded by the celebrated Tarik; the issue of which was the defeat and death of Roderick, and the occupation of almost the whole peninsula by the Moors. Voltaire, in his General History, expresses his doubts of this popular story, and Gibbon gives him some countenance. But the universal tradition is quite sufficient for the purposes of poetry. The Spaniards, in detestation of Florinda's memory, are said, by Cervantes, never to bestow that name upon any human female, reserving it for their dogs. Nor is the tradition less inveterate among the Moors, since the same author mentions a promontory on the coast of Barbary, called "The Cape of Caba Rumia, which, in our tongue, is the Cape of the Wicked Christain Woman; and it is a tradition among the Moors, that Caba, the daughter of count Julian, who was the cause of the loss of Spain, lies buried there, and they think it ominous to be forced into that bay; for they never go in otherwise than by necessity."

6. And guide me, priest, to that mysterious room,
Where, if aught true in old tradition be,
His nation's future fate a Spanish king shall see.—P. 369.

The transition of an incident from history to tradition, and from tradition to fable and romance, becoming more marvellous at each step from its original simplicity, is not ill exemplified in the account of the "Fated Chamber" of Don Roderick, as given by his namesake, the historian of Toledo, contrasted with subsequent and more romantic accounts of the same subterranean discovery. I give the archbishop of Toledo's tale in the words of Nonius, who seems to intimate (though very modestly,) that the *fatale palatium*, of which so much had been said, was only the ruins of a Roman amphitheatre.

"Extra muros, septentrionem versus, vestigia magni olim theatri sparsa visuntur. Auctor est Rodericus Toletanus Archiepiscopus ante Arabum in Hispanias irruptionem, hic *fatale palatium* fuisse; quod invieti veetes, æterna ferri robora claudebant, ne reseratum Hispaniæ excidium adferret; quod in fatis non vulgus solum, sed et prudentissimi quique eredebant. Sed Roderici ultimi Gothorum Regis animum infelix curiositas subiit, sciendi quid sub tot vetitis claustris observaretur; ingentes ibi superiorum regum opes et arcanos thesauros servari ratus. Seras et pessulos perfringi curat, invitis omnibus, nihil præter arculam repertam, et in ea linteum, quo explicato novæ et insolentes hominum facies habitusque apparuere, cum inscriptione Latina, *Hispaniæ excidium ab illa gente imminere;* vultus habitusque Maurorum erant. Quamobrem ex Africa tantam cladem instare regi cæterisque persuasum; nec falso ut Hispaniæ annales etiamnum queruntur."—*Hispania Ludovic. Nonij*, cap. lix.

But about the term of the expulsion of the Moors from Grenada, we find, in the "Historia Verdadera del Roy Don Roderigo," a (pretended) translation from the Arabic of the sage Alcayde Albucacim Tarif Abentarique, a legend which puts to shame the modesty of the historian Roderick, with his chest and prophetic picture. The custom of ascribing a pretended Moorish original to these legendary histories, is ridiculed by Cervantes, who affects to translate the history of the Knight of the Woful Figure, from the Arabic of the sage Cid Hamet Benengeli. As I have been indebted to the *Historia Verdadera* for some of the imagery employed in the text, the following literal translation from the work itself may gratify the inquisitive reader:—

"One mile on the east side of the city of Toledo, among some rocks, was situated an ancient tower, of a magnificent structure, though much dilapidated by time, which consumes all: four estadoes (*i. e.* four times a man's height,) below it, there was a cave with a very narrow entrance, and a gate cut out of the solid rock, lined with a strong covering of iron, and fastened with many locks; above the gate some Greek letters are engraved, which, although abbreviated, and of doubtful meaning, were thus interpreted, according to the exposition of learned men:—'The king who opens this cave, and can discover the wonders, will discover both good and evil things.'—Many kings desired to know the mystery of this tower, and sought to find out the manner with much care: but when they opened the gate, such a tremendous noise arose in the cave, that it appeared as if the earth was bursting; many of those present sickened with fear, and others lost their lives. In order to prevent such great perils, (as they supposed a dangerous enchantment was contained within,) they secured the gate with new locks, concluding, that though a king was destined to open it, the fated time was not yet arrived. At last king Don Rodrigo, led on by his evil fortune and unlucky des-

tiny, opened the tower; and some bold attendants whom he had brought with him entered, although agitated with fear. Having proceeded a good way, they fled back to the entrance, terrified with a frightful vision which they had beheld. The king was greatly moved, and ordered many torches, so contrived that the tempest in the cave could not extinguish them, to be lighted. Then the king entered, not without fear, before all the others. They discovered, by degrees, a splendid hall, apparently built in a very sumptuous manner; in the middle stood a bronze statue of very ferocious appearance, which held a battle-axe in its hands. With this he struck the floor violently, giving it such heavy blows, that the noise in the cave was occasioned by the motion of the air. The king, greatly affrighted and astonished, began to conjure this terrible vision, promising that he would return without doing any injury in the cave, after he had obtained sight of what was contained in it. The statue ceased to strike the floor, and the king, with his followers, somewhat assured, and recovering their courage, proceeded into the hall; and on the left of the statue they found this inscription on the wall; 'Unfortunate king, thou hast entered here in evil hour.' On the right side of the wall these words were inscribed, 'By strange nations thou shalt be dispossessed, and thy subjects foully degraded.' On the shoulders of the statue other words were written, which said, 'I call upon the Arabs.' And upon his breast was written, 'I do my office.' At the entrance of the hall there was placed a round bowl, from which a great noise, like the fall of waters, proceeded. They found no other thing in the hall; and when the king, sorrowful and greatly affected, had scarcely turned about to leave the cavern, the statue again commenced its accustomed blows upon the floor. After they had mutually promised to conceal what they had seen, they again closed the tower, and blocked up the gate of the cavern with earth, that no memory might remain in the world of such a portentous and evil-boding prodigy. The ensuing midnight they heard great cries and clamour from the cave, resounding like the noise of a battle, and the ground shaking with a tremendous roar; the whole edifice of the old tower fell to the ground, by which they were greatly affrighted, the vision which they had beheld appearing to them as a dream.

"The king, having left the tower, ordered wise men to explain what the inscription signified; and having consulted upon and studied their meaning, they declared that the statue of bronze, with the motion which it made with its battle-axe, signified Time; and that its office, alluded to in the inscription on his breast, was, that he never rests a single moment. The words on the shoulders, 'I call upon the Arabs,' they expounded that in time Spain would be conquered by the Arabs. The words upon the left wall signified the destruction of king Rodrigo; those on the right, the dreadful calamities which were to fall upon the Spaniards and Goths, and that the unfortunate king would be dispossessed of all his states. Finally, the letters on the portal indicated, that good would betide to the conquerors, and evil to the conquered, of which experience proved the truth."—*Historia Verdadeyra del Rey Don Rodrigo.* Quinta impression. Madrid, 1654, 4. p. 23.

7. The tecbir war-cry, and the lelies' yell.—P. 370.

The tecbir (derived from the words *Alla acbar*, God is most mighty) was the original war-cry of the Saracens. It is celebrated by Hughes, in the siege of Damascus.

> We heard the tecbir; so these Arabs call
> Their shout of onset, when with loud appeal
> They challenge heaven, as if demanding conquest.

The *Lelie*, well known to the christians during the crusades, is the shout of *Alla illa Alla*, the Mahommedan confession of faith. It is twice used in poetry by my friend Mr. W. Stuart Rose, in the Romance of Partenopax, and in the Crusade of St. Lewis.

8. By heaven, the Moors prevail!—the christians yield!
> Their coward leader gives for flight the sign!
> The scepter'd craven mounts to quit the field—
> Is not yon steed Orelia?—Yes, 'tis mine!—P. 370.

Count Julian, the father of the injured Florinda, with the connivance and assistance of Oppas, archbishop of Toledo, invited, in 713, the Saracens into Spain. A considerable army arrived under the command of Tarik, or Tarif, who bequeathed the well-known name of Gibraltar (*Gibel al Tarik*, or the mountain of Tarik) to the place of his landing. He was joined by count Julian, ravaged Andalusia, and took Seville. In 714 they returned with a still greater force, and Roderick marched into Andalusia at the head of a great army to give them battle. The field was chosen near Xeres, and Mariana gives the following account of the action:

"Both armies being drawn up, the king, according to the custom of the Gothic kings when they went to battle, appeared in an ivory chariot, clothed in cloth of gold, encouraging his men; Tarif, on the other side, did the same. The armies, thus prepared, waited only for the signal to fall on; the Goths gave the charge, their drums and trumpets sounding, and the Moors received it with the noise of kettle-drums. Such were the shouts and cries on both sides, that the mountains and vallies seemed to meet. First they began with slings, darts, javelins, and lances, then came to the swords; a long time the battle was dubious, but the Moors seemed to have the worst, till D. Oppas, the archbishop, having to that time concealed his treachery, in the heat of the fight, with a great body of his followers, went over to the infidels. He joined count Julian, with whom was a great number of Goths, and both together fell upon the flank of our army. Our men, terrified with that unparalleled treachery, and tired with fighting, could no longer sustain that charge, but were easily put to flight. The king performed the part not only of a wise general but of a resolute soldier, relieving the weakest, bringing on fresh men in the place of those that were tired, and stopping those that turned their backs. At length, seeing no hope left, he alighted out of his chariot for fear of being taken, and, mounting on a horse, called Orelia, he withdrew out of the battle. The Goths, who still stood, missing him, were most part put to the sword, the rest betook themselves to flight. The camp was immediately entered, and the baggage taken. What number was killed is not known: I suppose they were so many it was hard to count them; for this single battle robbed Spain of all its glory, and in it perished the renowned name of the Goths. The king's horse, upper garment, and buskins, covered with pearls and precious stones, were found on the bank of the river Guadelite, and there being no news of him afterwards, it was supposed he was drowned passing the river."—Mariana's *History of Spain*, book vi, chap. 9.

Orelia, the courser of Don Roderick, mentioned in the text, and in the above quotation, was celebrated for her speed and form. She is mentioned repeatedly in Spanish romance, and also by Cervantes.

9. When for the light bolero ready stand
The Mozo blith, with gay Muchacha met.—P. 371.

The bolero is a very light and active dance, much practised by the Spaniards, in which castanets are always used. *Mozo* and *Muchacha* are equivalent to our phrase of lad and lass.

10. While trumpets rang, and heralds cried, "Castile."—P. 372.

The heralds at the coronation of a Spanish monarch proclaim his name three times, and repeat three times the word *Castilla, Castilla, Castilla;* which, with all other ceremonies, was carefully copied in the mock inauguration of Joseph Buonaparte.

11. High blazed the war, and long, and far, and wide.—P. 372.

Those who were disposed to believe that mere virtue and energy are able of themselves to work forth the salvation of an oppressed people, surprised in a moment of confidence, deprived of their officers, armies, and fortresses, who had every means of resistance to seek in the very moment when they were to be made use of, and whom the numerous treasons among the higher orders deprived of confidence in their natural leaders,—those who entertained this enthusiastic but delusive opinion, may be pardoned for expressing their disappointment at the protracted warfare in the peninsula. There are, however, another class of persons, who, having themselves the highest dread or veneration, or something allied to both, for the power of the modern Attila, will nevertheless give the heroical Spaniards little or no credit for the long, stubborn, and unsubdued resistance of three years to a power before whom their former well-prepared, well-armed, and numerous adversaries fell in the course of as many months. While these gentlemen plead for deference to Buonaparte, and crave

Respect for his great place—and bid the devil
Be duly honour'd for his burning throne,

it may not be altogether unreasonable to claim some modification of censure upon those who have been long and to a great extent successfully resisting this great enemy of mankind. That the energy of Spain has not uniformly been directed by conduct equal to its vigour, has been too obvious; that her armies, under their complicated disadvantages, have shared the fate of such as were defeated after taking the field with every possible advantage of arms and discipline, is surely not to be wondered at. But that a nation, under the circumstances of repeated discomfiture, internal treason, and the mismanagement incident to a temporary and hastily adopted government, should have wasted, by its stubborn, uniform, and prolonged resistance, myriads after myriads of those soldiers who had overrun the world—that some of its provinces should, like Galicia, after being abandoned by their allies, and overrun by their enemies, have recovered their freedom by their own unassisted exertions; that others, like Catalonia, undismayed by the treason which betrayed some fortresses, and the force which subdued others, should not only have continued their resistance, but have attained over their victorious enemy a superiority, which is even now enabling them to besiege and retake the places of strength which had been wrested from them,—is a tale hitherto untold in the revolutionary war. To say that such a people cannot be subdued, would be presumption similar to that of those who protested that Spain could not defend herself for a year, or Portugal for a month; but that a resistance which has been continued for so long a space, when the usurper, except during the short-lived Austrian campaign, had no other enemies on the continent, should be now less successful, when repeated defeats have broken the reputation of the French armies, and when they are likely (it would seem almost in desperation) to seek occupation elsewhere, is a prophecy as improbable as ungracious. And while we are in the humour of severely censuring our allies, gallant and devoted as they have shown themselves in the cause of national liberty, because they may not instantly adopt those measures which we in our wisdom may deem essential to success, it might be well, if we endeavoured first to resolve the previous questions,—1st, Whether we do not at this moment know much less of the Spanish armies than of those of Portugal, which were so promptly condemned as totally inadequate to assist in the preservation of their country? 2d, Whether, independently of any right we have to offer more than advice and assistance to our independent allies, we can expect that they should renounce entirely the national pride, which is inseparable from patriotism, and at once condescend not only to be saved by our assistance, but to be saved in our own way? 3d, Whether, if it be an object (as undoubtedly it is a main one,) that the Spanish troops should be trained under British discipline, to the flexibility of movement, and power of rapid concert and combination, which is essential to modern war, such a consummation is likely to be produced by abusing them in newspapers and periodical publications? Lastly, Since the undoubted authority of British officers makes us now acquainted with part of the horrors that attend invasion, and which the Providence of God, the valour of our navy, and perhaps the very efforts of these Spaniards, have hitherto diverted from us, it may be modestly questioned whether we ought to be too forward to estimate and condemn the feeling of temporary stupefaction which they create; lest, in so doing, we should resemble the worthy clergyman, who, while he had himself never snuffed a candle with his fingers, was disposed severely to criticise the conduct of a martyr who winced a little among his flames.

12. They won not Zaragoza, but her children's bloody tomb.—P. 373.

The interesting account of Mr. Vaughan has made most readers acquainted with the first siege of Zaragoza. The last and fatal siege of that gallant and devoted city is detailed with great eloquence and precision in the "Edinburgh Annual Register" for 1809,—a work in which the affairs of Spain have been treated of with attention corresponding to their deep interest, and to the peculiar sources of information open to the historian. The following are a few brief extracts from this splendid historical narrative:—

"A breach was soon made in the mud walls, and then, as in the former siege, the war was carried on in the streets and houses: but the French had been taught, by experience, that in this species

of warfare the Zaragozans derived a superiority from the feeling and principle which inspired them, and the cause for which they fought. The only means of conquering Zaragoza was to destroy it house by house, and street by street, and upon this system of destruction they proceeded. Three companies of miners and eight companies of sappers carried on this subterraneous war; the Spaniards, it is said, attempted to oppose them by countermines: these were operations to which they were wholly unused, and, according to the French statement, their miners were every day discovered and suffocated. Meantime the bombardment was incessantly kept up. 'Within the last forty-eight hours,' said Palafox, in a letter to his friend general Doyle, '6000 shells have been thrown in. Two-thirds of the town are in ruins; but we shall perish under the ruins of the remaining third rather than surrender.' In the course of the siege above 17,000 bombs were thrown at the town; the stock of powder with which Zaragoza had been stored was exhausted; they had none at last but what they manufactured day by day; and no other cannon-balls than those which were shot into the town, and which they collected and fired back upon the enemy."———

In the midst of these horrors and privations, the pestilence broke out in Zaragoza. To various causes, enumerated by the annalist, he adds, "scantiness of food, crowded quarters, unusual exertion of body, anxiety of mind, and the impossibility of recruiting their exhausted strength by needful rest in a city which was almost incessantly bombarded, and where every hour their sleep was broken by the tremendous explosion of mines. There was now no respite, either by day or night, for this devoted city; even the natural order of light and darkness was destroyed in Zaragoza; by day it was involved in a red sulphureous atmosphere of smoke, which hid the face of heaven; by night the fire of cannons and mortars, and the flames of burning houses, kept it in a state of terrific illumination.

"When once the pestilence had begun, it was impossible to check its progress, or confine it to one quarter of the city. Hospitals were immediately established,—there were above thirty of them; as soon as one was destroyed by the bombardment, the patients were removed to another, and thus the infection was carried to every part of Zaragoza. Famine aggravated the evil; the city had probably not been sufficiently provided at the commencement of the siege, and of the provisions which it contained, much was destroyed in the daily ruin which the mines and bombs effected. Had the Zaragozans and their garrison proceeded according to military rules, they would have surrendered before the end of January; their batteries had then been demolished, there were open breaches in many parts of their weak walls, and the enemy were already within the city. On the 30th above sixty houses were blown up, and the French obtained possession of the monasteries of the Augustines and Les Monicas, which adjoined each other, two of the last defensible places left. The enemy forced their way into the church; every column, every chapel, every altar, became a point of defence, which was repeatedly attacked, taken, and retaken; the pavement was covered with blood, the aisles and body of the church strewed with the dead, who were trampled under foot by the combatants. In the midst of this conflict, the roof, shattered by repeated bombs, fell in; the few who were not crushed, after a short pause, which this tremendous shock and their own unexpected escape occasioned, renewed the fight with rekindling fury: fresh parties of the enemy poured in; monks, and citizens, and soldiers came to the defence, and the contest was continued upon the ruins, and the bodies of the dead and the dying."

Yet, seventeen days after sustaining these extremities, did the heroic inhabitants of Zaragoza continue their defence; nor did they then surrender until their despair had extracted from the French generals a capitulation, more honourable than has been granted to fortresses of the first order.

Who shall venture to refuse the Zaragozans the eulogium conferred upon them by the eloquence of Wordsworth?—"Most gloriously have the citizens of Zaragoza proved that the true army of Spain, in a contest of this nature, is the whole people. The same city has also exemplified a melancholy, yea, a dismal truth,—yet consolatory and full of joy,—that when a people are called suddenly to fight for their liberty, and are sorely pressed upon, their best field of battle is the floors upon which their children have played; the chambers where the family of each man has slept, (his own or his neighbour's;) upon or under the roofs by which they have been sheltered; in the gardens of their recreation; in the street, or in the market place; before the altars of their temples, and among their congregated dwellings, blazing or uprooted.

"The government of Spain must never forget Zaragoza, for a moment. Nothing is wanting to produce the same effects every where, but a leading mind, such as that city was blessed with. In the latter contest this has been proved; for Zaragoza contained, at that time, bodies of men from almost all parts of Spain. The narrative of those two sieges should be the manual of every Spaniard. He may add to it the ancient stories of Numantia and Saguntum; let him sleep upon the book as a pillow, and, if he be a devout adherent to the religion of his country, let him wear it in his bosom for his crucifix to rest upon."

13. —— the vault of destiny.—P. 374.

Before finally dismissing the enchanted cavern of Don Roderick, it may be noticed, that the legend occurs in one of Calderon's plays, entitled, *La Virgin del Sagrario*. The scene opens with the noise of the chase, and Recisundo, a predecessor of Roderick upon the Gothic throne, enters pursuing a stag. The animal assumes the form of a man, and defies the king to enter the cave, which forms the bottom of the scene, and engage with him in single combat. The king accepts the challenge, and they engage accordingly, but without advantage on either side, which induces the genie to inform Recisundo, that he is not the monarch for whom the adventure of the enchanted cavern is reserved, and he proceeds to predict the downfall of the Gothic monarchy, and of the christian religion, which shall attend the discovery of its mysteries. Recisundo, appalled by these prophecies, orders the cavern to be secured by a gate and bolts of iron. In the second part of the same play we are informed, that Don Roderick had removed the barrier and transgressed the prohibition of his ancestor, and had been apprized by the prodigies which he discovered of the approaching ruin of his kingdom.

14. While downward on the land his legions press,
Before them it was rich with vine and flock,
And smiled like Eden in her summer dress:—
Behind their wasteful march, a reeking wilderness.—
P. 374.

I have ventured to apply to the movements of the French army that sublime passage in the prophecies of Joel, which seems applicable to them in more respects than that I have adopted in the text. One would think their ravages, their military appointments, the terror which they spread among invaded nations, their military discipline, their arts of political intrigue and deceit, were distinctly pointed out in the following verses of Scripture:—

2. "A day of darknesse and of gloominesse, a day of clouds and of thick darknesse, as the morning spread upon the mountains: a great people and a strong, there hath not been ever the like, neither shall be any more after it, even to the years of many generations.

3. "A fire devoureth before them, and behind them a flame burneth: the land is as the garden of Eden before them, and behinde them a desolate wildernesse, yea, and nothing shall escape them.

4. "The appearance of them is as the appearance of horses and as horsemen, so shall they runne.

5. "Like the noise of chariots on the tops of mountains shall they leap, like the noise of a flame of fire that devoureth the stubble, as a strong people set in battle array.

6. "Before their face shall the people be much pained: all faces shall gather blacknesse.

7. "They shall run like mighty men, they shall climbe the wall like men of warre, and they shall march every one in his wayes, and they shall not break their ranks.

8. "Neither shall one trust another, they shall walk every one in his path: and when they fall upon the sword they shall not be wounded.

9. "They shall run to and fro in the citie: they shall run upon the wall, they shall climbe up upon the houses; they shall enter in at the windows like a thief.

10. "The earth shall quake before them, the heavens shall tremble, the sunne and the moon shall be dark, and the starres shall withdraw their shining."

In verse 20th also, which announces the retreat of the northern army, described in such dreadful colours, into a "land barren and desolate," and the dishonour with which God afflicted them for having "magnified themselves to do great things," there are particulars not inapplicable to the retreat of Masséna; Divine Providence having, in all ages, attached disgrace as the natural punishment of cruelty and presumption.

15. The rudest sentinel, in Britain born,
— — — — — —
Gave his poor crust to feed some wretch forlorn.—P. 374.

Even the unexampled gallantry of the British army in the campaign of 1810-11, although they never fought but to conquer, will do them less honour in history than their humanity, attentive to soften to the utmost of their power the horrors which war, in its mildest aspect, must always inflict upon the defenceless inhabitants of the country in which it is waged, and which, on this occasion, were tenfold augmented by the barbarous cruelties of the French. Soup-kitchens were established by subscription among the officers, wherever the troops were quartered for any length of time. The commissaries contributed the heads, feet, &c. of the cattle slaughtered for the soldiery; rice, vegetables, and bread, where it could be had, were purchased by the officers. Fifty or sixty starving peasants were daily fed at one of these regimental establishments, and carried home the relics to their famished households. The emaciated wretches, who could not crawl from weakness, were speedily employed in pruning their vines. While pursuing Masséna, the soldiers evinced the same spirit of humanity; and, in many instances, when reduced themselves to short allowance, from having out-marched their supplies, they shared their pittance with the starving inhabitants who had ventured back to view the ruins of their habitations, burned by the retreating enemy, and to bury the bodies of their relations whom they had butchered. Is it possible to know such facts without feeling a sort of confidence, that those who so well deserve victory are most likely to attain it?—It is not the least of lord Wellington's military merits, that the slightest disposition towards marauding meets immediate punishment. Independently of all moral obligation, the army which is most orderly in a friendly country, has always proved most formidable to an armed enemy.

16. Vainglorious fugitive!—P. 374.

The French conducted this memorable retreat with much of the *fanfarronade* proper to their country, by which they attempt to impose upon others, and perhaps upon themselves, a belief that they are triumphing in the very moment of their discomfiture. On the 30th March, 1811, their rearguard was overtaken near Pega by the British cavalry. Being well posted, and conceiving themselves safe from infantry, (who were indeed many miles in the rear,) and from artillery, they indulged themselves in parading their bands of music, and actually performed "God save the king." Their minstrelsy was however deranged by the undesired accompaniment of the British horse-artillery, on whose part in the concert they had not calculated. The surprise was sudden, and the rout complete; for the artillery and cavalry did execution upon them for about four miles, pursuing at the gallop as often as they got beyond the range of the guns.

17. Vainly thy squadrons hide Assuava's plain,
And front the flying thunders as they roar,
With frantic charge and ten-fold odds, in vain!—P. 374.

In the severe action of Fuentes d'Honoro, upon 5th May, 1811, the grand mass of the French cavalry attacked the right of the British position, covered by two guns of the horse-artillery, and two squadrons of cavalry. After suffering considerably from the fire of the guns, which annoyed them in every attempt at formation, the enemy turned their wrath entirely towards them, distributed brandy among their troopers, and advanced to carry the field-pieces with the desperation of drunken fury. They were in no ways checked by the heavy loss which they sustained in this daring attempt, but closed, and fairly mingled with the British cavalry, to whom they bore the proportion of ten to one. Captain Ramsey, (let me be permitted to name a gallant countryman,) who commanded the two guns, dismissed them at the gallop, and, putting himself at the head of the mounted artillerymen, ordered them to fall upon the French, sabre-in-hand. This very unexpected conversion of artillerymen into dragoons contributed greatly to the defeat of the enemy, already disconcerted by the reception they had met from the two British squadrons; and the appearance of some small rein-

forcements, notwithstanding the immense disproportion of force, put them to absolute rout. A colonel or major of their cavalry, and many prisoners, (almost all intoxicated,) remained in our possession. Those who consider for a moment the difference of the services, and how much an artilleryman is necessarily and naturally led to identify his own safety and utility with abiding by the tremendous implement of war, to the exercise of which he is chiefly, if not exclusively, trained, will know how to estimate the presence of mind which commanded so bold a manœuvre, and the steadiness and confidence with which it was executed.

18. And what avails thee that, for Cameron slain,
Wild from his plaided ranks the yell was given.—
P. 374.

The gallant colonel Cameron was wounded mortally during the desperate contest in the streets of the village called Fuentes d'Honoro. He fell at the head of his native highlanders, the 71st and 79th, who raised a dreadful shriek of grief and rage. They charged, with irresistible fury, the finest body of French grenadiers ever seen, being a part of Bonaparte's selected guard. The officer who led the French, a man remarkable for stature and symmetry, was killed on the spot. The Frenchman who stepped out of his rank to take aim at colonel Cameron, was also bayoneted, pierced with a thousand wounds, and almost torn to pieces by the furious highlanders, who, under the command of colonel Cadogan, bore the enemy out of the contested ground at the point of the bayonet. Massena pays my countrymen a singular compliment in his account of the attack and defence of this village, in which, he says, the British lost many officers, *and Scotch.*

19. O who shall grudge him Albuera's bays,
Who brought a race regenerate to the field,
Roused them to emulate their fathers' praise,
Temper'd their headlong rage, their courage steel'd.
P. 375.

Nothing during the war of Portugal seems, to a distinct observer, more deserving of praise, than the self-devotion of field-marshal Beresford, who was contented to undertake all the hazard of obloquy which might have been founded upon any miscarriage in the highly important experiment of training the Portuguese troops to an improved state of discipline. In exposing his military reputation to the censure of imprudence from the most moderate, and all manner of unutterable calumnies from the ignorant and malignant, he placed at stake the dearest pledge which a military man had to offer, and nothing but the deepest conviction of the high and essential importance attached to success can be supposed an adequate motive. How great the chance of miscarriage was supposed, may be estimated from the general opinion of officers of unquestioned talents and experience, possessed of every opportunity of information; how completely the experiment has succeeded, and how much the spirit and patriotism of our ancient allies had been underrated, is evident, not only from those victories in which they have borne a distinguished share, but from the liberal and highly honourable manner in which these opinions have been retracted. The success of this plan, with all its important consequences, we owe to the indefatigable exertions of field-marshal Beresford.

20. ——a race renown'd of old,
Whose war-cry oft has waked the battle-swell.—P. 375.

This stanza alludes to the various achievements of the warlike family of Græme, or Graham. They are said, by tradition, to have descended from the Scottish chief, under whose command his countrymen stormed the wall built by the emperor Severus between the firths of Forth and Clyde, the fragments of which are still popularly called Græme's dyke. Sir John the Græme, "the hardy, wight, and wise," is well known as the friend of sir William Wallace. Alderne, Kilsyth, and Tibbermuir, were scenes of the victories of the heroic marquis of Montrose. The pass of Killy-crankie is famous for the action between king William's forces and the highlanders in 1689,

"Where glad Dundee in faint huzzas expired."

It is seldom that one line can number so many heroes, and yet more rare when it can appeal to the glory of a living descendant in support of its ancient renown.

The allusions to the private history and character of general Graham may be illustrated by referring to the eloquent and affecting speech of Mr. Sheridan, upon the vote of thanks to the victor of Barosa.

The Field of Waterloo:

A POEM.

Though Valois braved young Edward's gentle hand,
And Albert rush'd on Henry's way-worn band,
With Europe's chosen sons in arms renown'd,
Yet not on Vere's bold archers long they look'd,
Nor Audley's squires nor Mowbray's yeomen brook'd——
They saw their standard fall, and left their monarch bound.—AKENSIDE.

TO HER GRACE THE DUCHESS OF WELLINGTON,

PRINCESS OF WATERLOO, &c., &c., &c.

THE FOLLOWING VERSES ARE MOST RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED, BY THE AUTHOR.

THE FIELD OF WATERLOO.

I.

Fair Brussels, thou art far behind,
Though, lingering on the morning wind,
We yet may hear the hour
Pealed over orchard and canal,
With voice prolonged and measured fall,
From proud saint Michael's tower.
Thy wood, dark Soignies, holds us now,
Where the tall beeches' glossy bough
For many a league around,

With birch and darksome oak between,
Spreads deep and far a pathless screen,
Of tangled forest ground.
Stems planted close by stems defy
Th' adventurous foot—the curious eye
For access seeks in vain!
And the brown tapestry of leaves,
Strewed on the blighted ground, receives
Nor sun, nor air, nor rain.
No opening glade dawns on our way,
No streamlet, glancing to the ray,
Our woodland path has crossed;
And the straight causeway which we tread
Prolongs a line of dull arcade,
Unvarying through the unvaried shade,
Until in distance lost.

II.

A brighter, livelier scene succeeds;
In groups the scattering wood recedes,
Hedge-rows, and huts, and sunny meads,
And corn-fields glance between;
The peasant, at his labour blith,
Plies the hooked staff and shortened sithe:—
But when these ears were green,
Placed close within destruction's scope,
Full little was that rustic's hope
Their ripening to have seen!
And, lo! a hamlet and its fane:—
Let not the gazer with disdain
Their architecture view;
For yonder rude ungraceful shrine,
And disproportioned spire, are thine,
Immortal Waterloo!

III.

Fear not the heat, though full and high
The sun has scorched the autumn sky,
And scarce a forest straggler now
To shade us spreads a greenwood bough.
These fields have seen a hotter day
Than e'er was fired by sunny ray.
Yet one mile on—yon shattered hedge
Crests the soft hill whose long smooth ridge
Looks on the field below,
And sinks so gently on the dale,
That not the folds of Beauty's veil
In easier curves can flow.
Brief space from thence, the ground again,
Ascending slowly from the plain,
Forms an opposing screen,
Which, with its crest of upland ground,
Shuts the horizon all around.
The softened vale between
Slopes smooth and fair for courser's tread;
Not the most timid maid need dread
To give her snow-white palfrey head
On that wide stubble-ground.
Nor wood, nor tree, nor bush are there,
Her course to intercept or scare,
Nor fosse nor fence are found,
Save where, from out her shattered bowers,
Rise Hougoumont's dismantled towers.

IV.

Now, seest thou aught in this lone scene
Can tell of that which late hath been?—
A stranger might reply,
"The bare extent of stubble-plain
Seems lately lightened of its grain;
And yonder sable tracks remain,
Marks of the peasant's ponderous wain,
When harvest-home was nigh.
On these broad spots of trampled ground,
Perchance the rustics danced such round
As Teniers loved to draw;
And where the earth seems scorched by flame,
To dress the homely feast they came,
And toiled the kerchiefed village dame
Around her fire of straw."—

V.

So deem'st thou—so each mortal deems,
Of that which is from that which seems:—
But other harvest here
Than that which peasant's sithe demands,
Was gathered in by sterner hands,
With bayonet, blade, and spear.
No vulgar crop was theirs to reap,
No stinted harvest thin and cheap!
Heroes before each fatal sweep
Fell thick as ripened grain;
And ere the darkening of the day,
Piled high as autumn shocks, there lay
The ghastly harvest of the fray,
The corpses of the slain.

VI.

Ay, look again—that line so black
And trampled, marks the bivouack,
Yon deep-graved ruts, the artillery's track,
So often lost and won;
And close beside, the hardened mud
Still shows where, fetlock-deep in blood,
The fierce dragoon, through battle's flood,
Dashed the hot war-horse on.
These spots of excavation tell
The ravage of the bursting shell—
And feel'st thou not the tainted steam,
That reeks against the sultry beam,
From yonder trenched mound?
The pestilential fumes declare
That carnage has replenished there
Her garner-house profound.

VII.

Far other harvest-home and feast,
Than claims the boor from sithe released,
On those scorched fields were known!
Death hovered o'er the maddening rout,
And, in the thrilling battle shout,
Sent for the bloody banquet out
A summons of his own.
Through rolling smoke the demon's eye
Could well each destined guest espy,
Well could his ear in ecstasy
Distinguish every tone
That filled the chorus of the fray—
From cannon-roar and trumpet-bray,
From charging squadrons' wild hurra,
From the wild clang that marked their way,—
Down to the dying groan,
And the last sob of life's decay
When breath was all but flown.

VIII.

Feast on, stern foe of mortal life,
Feast on!—but think not that a strife,
With such promiscuous carnage rife,
Protracted space my last;
The deadly tug of war at length
Must limits find in human strength,
And cease when these are passed.
Vain hope!—that morn's o'erclouded sun
Heard the wild shout of fight begun
Ere he attained his height,
And through the war-smoke volumed high,
Still peals that unremitted cry,

Though now he stoops to night.
For ten long hours of doubt and dread,
Fresh succours from the extended head
Of either hill the contest fed;
Still down the slope they drew,
The charge of columns paused not,
Nor ceased the storm of shell and shot;
For all that war could do,
Of skill and force, was proved that day,
And turned not yet the doubtful fray
On bloody Waterloo.

IX.

Pale Brussels! then what thoughts were thine,[2]
When ceaseless from the distant line
Continued thunders came!
Each burgher held his breath to hear
These forerunners of havoc near,
Of rapine and of flame.
What ghastly sights were thine to meet,
When rolling through thy stately street,
The wounded showed their mangled plight
In token of the unfinished fight,
And from each anguish-laden wain
The blood-drops laid thy dust like rain!
How often in the distant drum
Heard'st thou the fell invader come,
While ruin, shouting to his band,
Shook high her torch and gory brand!—
Cheer thee, fair city! from yon stand,
Impatient, still his outstretched hand
Points to his prey in vain,
While maddening in his eager mood,
And all unwont to be withstood,
He fires the fight again.

X.

"On! On!" was still his stern exclaim,
"Confront the battery's jaws of flame!
Rush on the levelled gun![3]
My steel-clad cuirassiers, advance!
Each Hulan forward with his lance,
My guard—my chosen—charge for France,
France and Napoleon!"
Loud answered their acclaiming shout,
Greeting the mandate which sent out
Their bravest and their best to dare
The fate their leader shunned to share.[4]
But he, his country's sword and shield,
Still in the battle-front revealed,
Where danger fiercest swept the field,
Came like a beam of light,
In action prompt, in sentence brief—
"Soldiers, stand firm!" exclaimed the chief,
"England shall tell the fight!"[5]

XI.

On came the whirlwind—like the last
But fiercest sweep of tempest blast—
On came the whirlwind—steel gleams broke
Like lightning through the rolling smoke.
The war was waked anew;
Three hundred cannon-mouths roared loud,
And from their throats, with flash and cloud,
Their showers of iron threw.
Beneath their fire, in full career,
Rushed on the ponderous cuirassier,
The lancer couched his ruthless spear,
And hurrying as to havoc near,
The cohorts' eagles flew.
In one dark torrent, broad and strong,
The advancing onset rolled along,
Forth harbingered by fierce acclaim,
That from the shroud of smoke and flame,
Pealed wildly the imperial name.

XII.

But on the British heart were lost
The terrors of the charging host;
For not an eye the storm that viewed
Changed its proud glance of fortitude,
Nor was one forward footstep staid,
As dropped the dying and the dead.
Fast as their ranks the thunders tear,
Fast they renewed each serried square;
And on the wounded and the slain
Closed their diminished files again,
Till from their line scarce spears' length three,
Emerging from the smoke they see
Helmet, and plume, and panoply—
Then waked their fire at once!
Each musketeer's revolving knell,
As fast, as regularly fell,
As when they practise to display
Their discipline on festal day.
Then down went helm and lance,
Down were the eagle banners sent,
Down reeling steeds and riders went,
Corslets were pierced, and pennons rent;
And to augment the fray,
Wheeled full against their staggering flanks,
The English horsemen's foaming ranks
Forced their resistless way.
Then to the musket-knell succeeds
The clash of swords—the neigh of steeds—
As plies the smith his clanging trade,
Against the cuirass rang the blade;[6]
And while amid their close array
The well-served cannon rent their way,
And while amid their scattered band
Raged the fierce rider's bloody brand,
Recoiled in common rout and fear,
Lancer, and guard, and cuirassier,
Horsemen and foot—a mingled host,
Their leaders fall'n, their standards lost.

XIII.

Then, Wellington! thy piercing eye
This crisis caught of destiny.
The British host had stood
That morn 'gainst charge of sword and lance,
As their own ocean-rocks hold stance,
But when thy voice had said, "Advance!"
They were their ocean's flood.—
O thou, whose inauspicious aim
Hath wrought thy host this hour of shame,
Think'st thou thy broken bands will bide
The terrors of yon rushing tide?
Or will thy chosen brook to feel
The British shock of levelled steel?[7]
Or dost thou turn thine eye
Where coming squadrons gleam afar,
And fresher thunders wake the war,
And other standards fly?—
Think not that in yon columns file
Thy conquering troops from distant Dyle—
Is Blucher yet unknown?
Or dwells not in thy memory still,
(Heard frequent in thine hour of ill,)
What notes of hate and vengeance thrill
In Prussia's trumpet tone?
What yet remains?—shall it be thine
To head the relics of thy line
In one dread effort more?—
The Roman lore thy leisure loved,
And thou can'st tell what fortune proved
That chieftain, who, of yore,
Ambition's dizzy paths essayed,
And with the gladiator's aid

For empire enterprised—
He stood the cast his rashness played,
Left not the victims he had made,
Dug his red grave with his own blade,
And on the field he lost was laid,
Abhorred—but not despised.

XIV.

But if revolves thy fainter thought
On safety—howsoever bought,
Then turn thy fearful rein and ride,
Though twice ten thousand men have died
On this eventful day,
To gild the military fame,
Which thou, for life, in traffick tame
Wilt barter thus away.
Shall future ages tell this tale
Of inconsistence faint and frail?
And art thou he of Lodi's bridge,
Marengo's field, and Wagram's ridge!
Or is thy soul like mountain-tide,
That, swelled by winter storm and shower,
Rolls down in turbulence of power
A torrent fierce and wide;
Reft of these aids, a rill obscure,
Shrinking unnoticed, mean, and poor,
Whose channel shows displayed
The wrecks of its impetuous course,
But not one symptom of the force
By which these wrecks were made.

XV.

Spur on thy way!—since now thine ear
Has brooked thy veterans' wish to hear,
Who, as thy flight they eyed,
Exclaimed—while tears of anguish came,
Wrung forth by pride, and rage, and shame—
"Oh that he had but died!"
But yet, to sum this hour of ill,
Look, ere thou leav'st the fatal hill,
Back on yon broken ranks—
Upon whose wild confusion gleams
The moon, as on the troubled streams
When rivers break their banks,
And, to the ruined peasant's eye,
Objects half seen roll swiftly by,
Down the dread current hurled—
So mingle banner, wain, and gun,
Where the tumultuous flight rolls on
Of warriors, who, when morn begun,
Defied a banded world.

XVI.

List—frequent to the hurrying rout,
The stern pursuers' vengeful shout
Tells, that upon their broken rear
Rages the Prussian's bloody spear.
So fell a shriek was none,
When Beresina's icy flood
Reddened and thawed with flame and blood,
And, pressing on thy desperate way,
Raised oft and long their wild hurra,
The children of the Don.
Thine ear no yell of horror cleft
So ominous, when, all bereft
Of aid, the valiant Polack left—
Ay, left by thee—found soldier's grave
In Leipsic's corse-encumbered wave.
Fate, in these various perils past,
Reserved thee still some future cast;—
On the dread die thou now hast thrown
Hangs not a single field alone,
Nor one campaign—thy martial fame,
Thy empire, dynasty, and name,
Have felt the final stroke;
And now, o'er thy devoted head
The last stern vial's wrath is shed,
The last dread seal is broke.

XVII.

Since live thou wilt—refuse not now
Before these demagogues to bow,
Late objects of thy scorn and hate,
Who shall thy once imperial fate
Make wordy theme of vain debate.—
Or shall we say, thou stoop'st less low
In seeking refuge from the foe,
Against whose heart, in prosperous life,
Thine hand hath ever held the knife?
Such homage hath been paid
By Roman and by Grecian voice,
And there were honour in the choice,
If it were freely made.
Then safely come—in one so low,
So lost—we cannot own a foe;
Though dear experience bid us end,
In thee we ne'er can hail a friend.
Come, howsoe'er—but do not hide
Close in thy heart that germ of pride,
Erewhile by gifted bard espied,
That "yet imperial hope;"
Think not that for a fresh rebound,
To raise ambition from the ground,
We yield thee means or scope.
In safety come—but ne'er again
Hold type of independent reign;
No islet calls thee lord,
We leave thee no confederate band,
No symbol of thy lost command,
To be a dagger in the hand
From which we wrenched the sword.

XVIII.

Yet, e'en in yon sequestered spot,
May worthier conquest be thy lot
Than yet thy life has known;
Conquest, unbought by blood or harm,
That needs not foreign aid nor arm,
A triumph all thine own.
Such waits thee when thou shalt control
Those passions wild, that stubborn soul,
That marred thy prosperous scene:
Hear this—from no unmoved heart,
Which sighs, comparing what thou art
With what thou might'st have been!

XIX.

Thou, too, whose deeds of fame renewed
Bankrupt a nation's gratitude,
To thine own noble heart must owe
More than the meed she can bestow.
For not a people's just acclaim,
Not the full hail of Europe's fame,
Thy prince's smiles, thy state's decree,
The ducal rank, the gartered knee,
Not these such pure delight afford,
As that, when, hanging up thy sword,
Well may'st thou think, "This honest steel
Was ever drawn for public weal;
And, such was rightful heaven's decree,
Ne'er sheathed unless with victory!"

XX.

Look forth, once more, with softened heart,
Ere from the field of fame we part,
Triumph and Sorrow border near,
And Joy oft melts into a tear.
Alas! what links of love that mourn
Has War's rude hand asunder torn!
For ne'er was field so sternly fought,
And ne'er was conquest dearer bought.

Here, piled in common slaughter, sleep
Those whom affection long shall weep;
Here rests the sire, that ne'er shall strain
His orphans to his heart again;
The son, whom, on his native shore,
The parent's voice shall bless no more;
The bridegroom, who has hardly pressed
His blushing consort to his breast;
The husband, whom, through many a year,
Long love and mutual faith endear.
Thou canst not name one tender tie
But here, dissolved, its relics lie!
O, when thou seest some mourner's veil
Shroud her thin form and visage pale,
Or mark'st the matron's bursting tears
Stream when the stricken drum she hears;
Or seest how manlier grief, suppressed,
Is labouring in a father's breast,—
With no inquiry vain pursue
The cause, but think on Waterloo!

XXI.

Period of honour as of woes,
What bright careers 'twas thine to close!—
Marked on thy roll of blood what names
To Britain's memory, and to Fame's,
Laid there their last immortal claims!
Thou saw'st in seas of gore expire
Redoubted Picton's soul of fire—
Saw'st in the mingled carnage lie
All that of Ponsonby could die—
De Lancy change Love's bridal wreath
For laurels from the hand of death—
Saw'st gallant Miller's failing eye
Still bent where Albion's banners fly,
And Cameron, in the shock of steel,
Die like the offspring of Lochiel;
And generous Gordon, 'mid the strife,
Fall while he watched his leader's life.—
Ah! though her guardian angel's shield
Fenced Britain's hero through the field,
Fate not the less her power made known
Through his friends' hearts to pierce his own!

XXII.

Forgive, brave dead, th' imperfect lay;
Who may your names, your number, say,
What high-strung harp, what lofty line,
To each the dear-earned praise assign,
From high-born chiefs of martial fame
To the poor soldier's lowlier name?
Lightly ye rose that dawning day,
From your cold couch of swamp and clay,
To fill, before the sun was low,
The bed that morning cannot know.
Oft may the tear the green sod steep,
And sacred be the heroes' sleep,
Till time shall cease to run;
And ne'er beside their noble grave
May Briton pass, and fail to crave
A blessing on the fallen brave,
Who fought with Wellington!

XXIII.

Farewell, sad field! whose blighted face
Wears desolation's withering trace;
Long shall my memory retain
Thy shattered huts and trampled grain,
With every mark of martial wrong,
That scathe thy towers, fair Hougoumont!
Yet though thy gardens green arcade
The marksman's fatal post was made,
Though on thy shattered beeches fell
The blended rage of shot and shell,
Though from thy blackened portals torn,
Their fall thy blighted fruit-trees mourn,
Has not such havoc bought a name
Immortal in the rolls of fame!
Yes—Agincourt may be forgot,
And Cressy be an unknown spot,
And Blenheim's name be new,
But still in story and in song,
For many an age remembered long,
Shall live the towers of Hougoumont,
And field of Waterloo.

CONCLUSION.

Stern tide of human Time! that know'st not rest,
But, sweeping from the cradle to the tomb,
Bear'st ever downward on thy dusky breast
Successive generations to their doom;
While thy capacious stream has equal room
For the gay bark where pleasure's streamers sport,
And for the prison-ship of guilt and gloom,
The fisher-skiff, and barge that bears a court,
Still wafting onward all to one dark silent port.

Stern tide of time! through what mysterious change
Of hope and fear have our frail barks been driven?
For ne'er, before, vicissitude so strange
Was to one race of Adam's offspring given.
And sure such varied change of sea and heaven,
Such unexpected bursts of joy and wo,
Such fearful strife as that where we have striven,
Succeeding ages ne'er again shall know,
Until the awful term when thou shalt cease to flow.

Well hast thou stood, my country!—the brave fight
Hast well maintain'd through good report and ill;
In thy just cause and in thy native might,
And in heaven's grace and justice constant still.
Whether the banded prowess, strength, and skill
Of half the world against thee, stood array'd,
Or when, with better views and freer will,
Beside thee Europe's noblest drew the blade,
Each emulous in arms the ocean queen to aid.

Well thou art now repaid—though slowly rose,
And struggled long with mists thy blaze of fame,
While like the dawn that in the orient glows
On the broad wave its earlier lustre came;
Then eastern Egypt saw the growing flame,
And Maida's myrtles gleam'd beneath its ray,
Where first the soldier, stung with gen'rous shame,
Rivall'd the heroes of the watery way,
And wash'd in foemen's gore unjust reproach away.

Now, Island empress, wave thy crest on high,
And bid the banner of thy patron flow,
Gallant saint George, the flower of chivalry!
For thou hast faced, like him, a dragon foe,
And rescued innocence from overthrow,
And trampled down, like him, tyrannic might,
And to the gazing world mayst proudly show
The chosen emblem of thy sainted knight,
Who quell'd devouring pride, and vindicated right.

Yet 'mid the confidence of just renown,
Renown dear-bought, but dearest thus acquired
Write, Britain, write the moral lesson down;
'Tis not alone the heart with valour fired,
The discipline so dreaded and admired,
In many a field of bloody conquest known;
—Such may by fame be lured—by gold be hired—
'Tis constancy in the good cause alone,
Best justifies the meed thy valiant sons have won.

NOTES.

1. The peasant, at his labour blith,
Plies the hook'd staff and shortened sithe.—P. 382.

The reaper in Flanders carries in his left hand a stick with an iron hook, with which he collects as much grain as he can cut at one sweep with a short sithe, which he holds in his right hand. They carry on this double process with great spirit and dexterity.

2. Pale Brussels! then what thoughts were thine.—P. 383.

It was affirmed by the prisoners of war, that Bonaparte had promised his army, in case of victory, twenty-four hours' plunder of the city of Brussels.

3. "Confront the battery's jaws of flame!
Rush on the level'd gun."—P. 383.

The characteristic obstinacy of Napoleon was never more fully displayed than in what we may be permitted to hope will prove the last of his fields. He would listen to no advice, and allow of no obstacles. An eye-witness has given the following account of his demeanour towards the end of the action:—

"It was near seven o'clock; Bonaparte, who, till then, had remained upon the ridge of the hill whence he could best behold what passed, contemplated, with a stern countenance, the scene of this horrible slaughter. The more that obstacles seemed to multiply, the more his obstinacy seemed to increase. He became indignant at these unforseen difficulties; and, far from fearing to push to extremities an army whose confidence in him was boundless, he ceased not to pour down fresh troops, and to give orders to march forward—to charge with the bayonet—to carry by storm. He was repeatedly informed, from different points, that the day went against him, and that the troops seemed to be disordered; to which he only replied,—'*En avant! en avant!*'

"One general sent to inform the emperor that he was in a position which he could not maintain, because it was commanded by a battery, and requested to know, at the same time, in what way he should protect his division from the murderous fire of the English artillery. 'Let him storm the battery,' replied Bonaparte, and turned his back on the aid-de-camp who brought the message."—*Relation de la bataille du Mont saint-Jean*, par un Tèmoin Oculaire. Paris, 1815, 8vo. p. 51.

4. The fate their leader shunn'd to share.—P. 383.

It has been reported that Bonaparte charged at the head of his guards at the last period of this dreadful conflict. This, however, is not accurate. He came down, indeed, to a hollow part of the high-road leading to Charleroi, within less than a quarter of a mile of the farm of La Haye Sainte, one of the points most fiercely disputed. Here he harangued the guards, and informed them that his preceding operations had destroyed the British infantry and cavalry, and that they had only to support the fire of the artillery, which they were to attack with the bayonet. This exhortation was received with shouts of *Vive l'Empereur*, which were heard over all our line, and led to an idea that Napoleon was charging in person. But the guards were led on by Ney; nor did Bonaparte approach nearer the scene of action than the spot already mentioned, which the rising banks on each side rendered secure from all such balls as did not come in a straight line. He witnessed the earlier part of the battle from places yet more remote, particularly from an observatory which had been placed there by the king of the Netherlands, some weeks before, for the purpose of surveying the country.* It is not meant to infer from these particulars that Napoleon showed on that memorable occasion, the least deficiency in personal courage; on the contrary, he evinced the greatest composure and presence of mind during the whole action. But it is no less true that report has erred in ascribing to him any desperate efforts of valour for recovery of the battle; and it is remarkable, that during the whole carnage, none of his suite were either killed or wounded, whereas scarcely one of the duke of Wellington's personal attendants escaped unhurt.

5. "England shall tell the fight.—P. 383."

In riding up to a regiment which was hard pressed, the duke called to the men, "Soldiers, we must never be beat,—what will they say in England?" It is needless to say how this appeal was answered.

6. As plies the smith his clanging trade,
Against the cuirass rang the blade.—P. 383.

A private soldier of the 95th regiment compared the sound which took place immediately upon the British cavalry mingling with those of the enemy, to "*a thousand tinkers at work mending pots and kettles.*"

7. Or will thy chosen brook to feel
The British shock of level'd steel.—P. 383.

No persuasion or authority could prevail upon the French troops to stand the shock of the bayonet. The imperial guards, in particular, hardly stood still till the British were within thirty yards of them, although the French author, already quoted, has put into their mouths the magnanimous sentiment, "The guards never yield—they die." The same author has covered the plateau, or eminence of St. Jean, which formed the British position, with redoubts and entrenchments which never had an existence. As the narrative, which is in many respects curious, was written by an eye-witness, he was probably deceived by the appearance of a road and ditch which runs along part of the hill. It may be also mentioned, in criticising this work, that the writer states the château of Hougoumont to have been carried by the French, although it was resolutely and successfully defended during the whole action. The enemy, indeed, possessed themselves of the wood by which it is surrounded, and at length set fire to the house itself; but the British (a detachment of the guards, under the command of colonel Macdonnell, and afterwards of colonel Home,) made good the garden, and thus preserved, by their desperate resistance, the post which covered the return of the duke of Wellington's right flank.

* The mistakes concerning this observatory have been mutual. The English supposed it was erected for the use of Bonaparte; and a French writer affirms it was constructed by the duke of Wellington.

Halidon Hill;

A DRAMATIC SKETCH FROM SCOTTISH HISTORY.

Knights, squires, and steeds, shall enter on the stage.
Essay on Criticism.

TO JOANNA BAILLIE,

AT WHOSE INSTANCE THE TASK WAS UNDERTAKEN,

THESE SCENES ARE INSCRIBED, AS A SLIGHT TESTIMONY OF THE AUTHOR'S HIGH RESPECT FOR HER TALENTS, AS WELL AS OF HIS SINCERE AND FAITHFUL FRIENDSHIP.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THOUGH the public seldom takes much interest in such communications, (nor is there any reason why they should,) the author takes the liberty of stating, that these scenes were commenced with the purpose of contributing to a miscellany projected by a much esteemed friend. But instead of being confined to a scene or two as intended, the work gradually swelled to the size of an independent publication. It is designed to illustrate military antiquities, and the manners of chivalry. The drama (if it can be termed one) is in no particular either designed or calculated for the stage; so that in case any attempt shall be made to produce it in action (as has happened in similar cases,) the author takes the present opportunity to intimate, that it shall be solely at the peril of those who make such an experiment.

The subject is to be found in Scottish history; but not to overload so slight a publication with antiquarian research, or quotations from obscure chronicles, may be sufficiently illustrated by the following passage from *Pinkerton's History of Scotland*, vol. i, p. 71.

"The governor (anno 1402) dispatched a considerable force under Murdac, his eldest son; the earls of Angus and Moray also joined Douglas, who entered England with an army of ten thousand men, carrying terror and devastation to the walls of Newcastle.

"Henry IV was now engaged in the Welch war against Owen Glendour; but the earl of Northumberland, and his son, the Hotspur Percy, with the earl of March, collected a numerous array, and awaited the return of the Scots, impeded with spoil, near Milfield, in the north part of Northumberland. Douglas had reached Wooler on his return; and, perceiving the enemy, seized a strong post between the two armies, called Homildon-hill. In this method he rivalled his predecessor at the battle of Otterburn, but not with like success. The English advanced to the assault, and Henry Percy was about to lead them up the hill, when March caught his bridle, and advised him to advance no farther, but to pour the dreadful shower of English arrows into the enemy. This advice was followed with the usual fortune; for in all ages the bow was the English weapon of victory, and though the Scots, and perhaps the French, were superior in the use of the spear, yet this weapon was useless after the distant bow had decided the combat. Robert the Great, sensible of this at the battle of Bannockburn, ordered a prepared detachment of cavalry to rush among the English archers at the commencement, totally to disperse them, and stop the deadly effusion. But Douglas now used no such precaution; and the consequence was, that his people, drawn up on the face of the hill, presented one general mark to the enemy, none of whose arrows descended in vain. The Scots fell without fight, and unrevenged, till a spirited knight, Swinton, exclaimed aloud, 'O my brave countrymen! what fascination has seized you to-day, that you stand like deer to be shot, instead of indulging your ancient courage, and meeting your enemies hand to hand? Let those who will, descend with me, that we may gain victory, or life, or fall like men.' This being heard by Adam Gordon, between whom and Swinton there existed an ancient deadly feud, attended with the mutual slaughter of many followers, he instantly fell on his knees before Swinton, begged his pardon, and desired to be dubbed a knight by him whom he must now regard as the wisest and the boldest of that order in Britain. The ceremony performed, Swinton and Gordon descended the hill, accompanied only by one hundred men; and a desperate valour led the whole body to death. Had a similar spirit been shown by the Scottish army, it is probable that the event of the day would have been different. Douglas, who was certainly deficient in the most important qualities of a general, seeing his army begin to disperse, at length attempted to descend the hill; but the English archers, retiring a little, sent a flight of arrows so sharp and strong, that no armour could withstand; and the Scottish leader himself, whose panoply was of remarkable temper, fell under five wounds, though not mortal. The English men-of-arms, knights, or squires, did not strike one blow, but remained spectators of the rout, which was now complete. Great numbers of Scots were slain, and near five hundred perished in the river Tweed upon their flight. Among the illustrious wounded were Douglas, whose chief wound deprived him of an eye; Murdac, son of Albany; the earls of Moray and Angus; and about four gentlemen of eminent rank and power. The chief slain, were, Swinton, Gordon, Livingston of Calender, Ramsay of Dalhousie, Walter Sinclair, Roger Gordon, Walter Scott, and others. Such was the issue of the unfortunate battle of Homildon."

It may be proper to observe, that the scene of action has, in the following pages, been transferred from Homildon to Halidon Hill. For this there was an obvious reason, for who would again venture to introduce upon the scene the celebrated Hotspur, who commanded the English at the for-

mer battle? There are, however, several coincidences which may reconcile even the severer antiquary to the substitution of Halidon Hill for Homildon. A Scottish army was defeated by the English on both occasions, and under nearly the same circumstances of address on the part of the victors, and mismanagement on that of the vanquished, for the English long-bow decided the day in both cases. In both cases, also, a Gordon was left on the field of battle; and at Halidon, as at Homildon, the Scots were commanded by an ill-fated representative of the great house of Douglas. He of Homildon was surnamed *Tine-man*, i. e. *Loseman*, from his repeated defeats and miscarriages, and with all the personal valour of his race, seems to have enjoyed so small a portion of their sagacity, as to be unable to learn military experience from reiterated calamity. I am far, however, from intimating, that the traits of imbecility and envy, attributed to the regent in the following sketch, are to be historically ascribed either to the elder Douglas of Halidon Hill, or to him called *Tine-man*, who seems to have enjoyed the respect of his countrymen, notwithstanding that, like the celebrated Anne de Montmorency, he was either defeated, or wounded, or made prisoner in every battle which he fought. The regent of the sketch is a character purely imaginary.

The tradition of the Swinton family, which still survives in a lineal descent, and to which the author has the honour to be related, avers, that the Swinton who fell at Homildon, in the manner narrated in the preceding extract, had slain Gordon's father; which seems sufficient ground for adopting that circumstance into the following Dramatic Sketch, though it is rendered improbable by other authorities.

If any reader will take the trouble of looking at Froissart, Fordun, or other historians of the period, he will find, that the character of the lord of Swinton, for strength, courage, and conduct, is by no means exaggerated.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

SCOTTISH.

THE REGENT OF SCOTLAND.

GORDON,
SWINTON,
LENNOX,
SUTHERLAND,
ROSS,
MAXWELL,
JOHNSTONE,
LINDESAY. } *Scottish chiefs and nobles.*

ADAM DE VIPONT, *a Knight Templar.*
THE PRIOR OF MAISON-DIEU.
REYNALD, *Swinton's Squire.*
HOB HATTELY, *a Border Moss-Trooper.*
Heralds.

ENGLISH.

KING EDWARD III.

CHANDOS,
PERCY,
RIBAUMONT. } *English and Norman Nobles.*

THE ABBOT OF WALTHAMSTOW.

HALIDON HILL.

ACT I.

SCENE I.

The northern side of the eminence of Halidon. The back scene represents the summit of the ascent, occupied by the rear guard of the Scottish army. Bodies of armed men appear as advancing from different points to join the main body.

Enter DE VIPONT *and the* PRIOR of MAISON-DIEU.

Vip. No farther, father—here I need no guidance—
I have already brought your peaceful step
Too near the verge of battle.
Pri. Fain would I see you join some baron's banner,
Before I say farewell. The honour'd sword
That fought so well in Syria should not wave
Amid the ignoble crowd.
Vip. Each spot is noble in a pitched field,
So that a man has room to fight and fall on't:
But I shall find out friends. 'Tis scarce twelve years
Since I left Scotland for the wars of Palestine,
And then the flower of all the Scottish nobles
Were known to me; and I, in my degree,
Not all unknown to them.
Pri. Alas! there have been changes since that time;
The royal Bruce, with Randolph, Douglas, Grahame,
Then shook in field the banners which now moulder
Over their graves i' the chancel.
Vip. And thence comes it,
That while I look'd on many a well-known crest
And blazon'd shield, as hitherward we came,
The faces of the barons who display'd them
Were all unknown to me. Brave youths they seem'd;
Yet, surely fitter to adorn the tilt-yard,
Than to be leaders of a war. Their followers,
Young like themselves, seem like themselves unpractised—
Look at their battle rank.
Pri. I cannot gaze on't with undazzled eye,
So thick the rays dart back from shield and helmet,
And sword and battle-axe, and spear and pennon.
Sure 'tis a gallant show! the Bruce himself
Hath often conquered at the head of fewer
And worse appointed followers.
Vip. Ay, but 'twas Bruce that led them. Reverend father,
'Tis not the falchion's weight decides a combat;
It is the strong and skilful hand that wields it.
Ill fate, that we should lack the noble king,
And all his champions now! Time call'd them not,
For when I parted hence for Palestine,
The brows of most were free from grizzled hair.
Pri. Too true, alas! But well you know, in Scotland,
Few hairs are silver'd underneath the helmet;
'Tis cowls like mine which hide them. 'Mongst the laity,
War's the rash reaper, who thrusts in his sickle
Before the grain is white. In threescore years
And ten, which I have seen, I have outlived
Well nigh two generations of our nobles.
The race which holds yon summit is the third.
Vip. Thou may'st outlive them also.
Pri. Heaven forefend!
My prayer shall be, that heaven will close my eyes,
Before they look upon the wrath to come.
Vip. Retire, retire, good father!—Pray for Scotland—
Think not on me. Here comes an ancient friend,
Brother in arms, with whom to-day I'll join me.
Back to your choir, assemble all your brotherhood,

And weary heaven with prayers for victory.
Pri. Heaven's blessing rest with thee,
Champion of heaven, and of thy suffering country!
[*Exit* PRIOR. VIPONT *draws a little aside, and lets down the beaver of his helmet.*
Enter SWINTON, *followed by* REYNALD *and others, to whom he speaks as he enters.*
Swin. Halt here, and plant my pennon, till the regent
Assign our band its station in the host.
Rey. That must be by the standard. We have had
That right since good saint David's reign at least.
Fain would I see the Marcher would dispute it.
Swin. Peace, Reynald! Where the general plants the soldier,
There is his place of honour, and there only
His valour can win worship. Thou'rt of those,
Who would have war's deep art bear the wild semblance
Of some disorder'd hunting, where, pell-mell,
Each trusting to the swiftness of his horse,
Gallants press on to see the quarry fall.
Yon steel-clad Southrons, Reynald, are no deer;
And England's Edward is no stag at bay.
Vip. (*advancing.*) There needed not, to blazen forth the Swinton,
His ancient burgonet, the sable boar
Chain'd to the guarled oak,—nor his proud step,
Nor giant stature, nor the ponderous mace,
Which only he of Scotland's realm can wield:
His discipline and wisdom mark the leader,
As doth his frame the champion. Hail, brave Swinton!
Swin. Brave templar, thanks! Such your cross'd shoulder speaks you;
But the closed visor, which conceals your features,
Forbids more knowledge. Umfraville, perhaps—
Vip. (*unclosing his helmet.*) No; one less worthy of our sacred order.
Yet, unless Syrian suns have scorch'd my features
Swart as my sable visor, Alan Swinton
Will welcome Symon Vipont.
Swin. (*embracing him.*) As the blith reaper
Welcomes a practised mate, when the ripe harvest
Lies deep before him, and the sun is high.
Thou'lt follow yon old pennon, wilt thou not?
'Tis tatter'd since thou saw'st it, and the boarheads
Look as if brought from off some christmas board,
Where knives had notch'd them deeply.
Vip. Have with them ne'ertheless. The Stuart's chequer,
The bloody heart of Douglas, Ross's lymphads,
Sutherland's wild-cats, nor the royal lion,
Rampant in golden tressure, wins me from them.
We'll back the boar-heads bravely. I see round them
A chosen band of lances—some well known to me.
Where's the main body of thy followers?
Swin. Symon de Vipont, thou dost see them all
That Swinton's bugle-horn can call to battle,
However loud it rings. There's not a boy
Left in my halls, whose arm has strength enough
To bear a sword—there's not a man behind,
However old, who moves without a staff.
Striplings and graybeards, every one is here,
And here all should be—Scotland needs them all:
And more and better men, were each a Hercules,
And yonder handful centuplied.
Vip. A thousand followers—such, with friends and kinsmen,
Allies and vassals, thou wert wont to lead—
A thousand followers shrunk to sixty lances
In twelve years' space!—And thy brave sons, sir Alan,
Alas! I fear to ask.
Swin. All slain, de Vipont. In my empty home
A puny babe lisps to a widow'd mother,
"Where is my grandsire? wherefore do you weep?"
But for that prattler, Lyulph's house is heirless.
I'm an old oak, from which the foresters
Have hew'd four goodly boughs, and left beside me
Only a sapling, which the fawn may crush
As he springs over it.
Vip. All slain—alas!
Swin. Ay, all, De Vipont. And their attributes,
John with the Long Spear—Archibald with the Axe—
Richard the Ready—and my youngest darling,
My Fair-haired William—do but now survive
In measures which the gray-hair'd minstrels sing,
When they make maidens weep.
Vip. These wars with England, they have rooted out
The flowers of christendom. Knights, who might win
The sepulchre of Christ from the rude heathen,
Fall in unholy warfare!
Swin. Unholy warfare? ay, well hast thou named it;
But not with England—would her cloth-yard shafts
Had bored their cuirasses! Their lives had been
Lost like their grandsires', in the bold defence
Of their dear country—but in private feud
With the proud Gordon, fell my Long-spear'd John,
He with the Axe, and he men call'd the Ready,
Ay, and my Fair-hair'd Will—the Gordon's wrath
Devour'd my gallant issue.
Vip. Since thou dost weep, their death is unavenged?
Swin. Templar, what think'st thou me? See yonder rock,
From which the fountain gushes—is it less
Compact of adamant, though waters flow from it?
Firm hearts have moister eyes. They *are* avenged;
I wept not till they were—till the proud Gordon
Had with his life-blood dyed my father's sword,
In guerdon that he thinn'd my father's lineage,
And then I wept my sons; and, as the Gordon
Lay at my feet, there was a tear for him,
Which mingled with the rest.—We had been friends,
Had shared the banquet and the chase together,
Fought side by side,—and our first cause of strife,
Wo to the pride of both, was but a light one.
Vip. You are at feud, then, with the mighty Gordon?
Swin. At deadly feud. Here in this border-land
Where the sire's quarrels descend upon the son,
As due a part of his inheritance,
As the strong castle, and the ancient blazon,
Where private vengeance holds the scales of justice,
Weighing each drop of blood as scrupulously
As Jews or Lombards balance silver pence,
Not in this land, 'twixt Solway and saint Abb's,
Rages a bitterer feud than mine and their's,
The Swinton and the Gordon.
Vip. You, with some threescore lances—and the Gordon
Leading a thousand followers.
Swin. You rate him far too low. Since you sought Palestine,
He hath had grants of baronies and lordships
In the far-distant north. A thousand horse
His southern friends and vassals always number'd.

Add Badenoch kerne, and horse from Dee and Spey,
He'll count a thousand more.—And now, De Vipont,
If the boar-heads seem in your eyes less worthy,
For lack of followers—seek yonder standard—
The bounding stag, with a brave host around it:
There the young Gordon makes his earliest field,
And pants to win his spurs. His father's friend,
As well as mine, thou wert—go, join his pennon,
And grace him with thy presence.

Vip. When you were friends, I was the friend of both,
And now I can be enemy to neither;
But my poor person, though but slight the aid,
Joins on this field the banner of the two
Which hath the smallest following.

Swin. Spoke like the generous knight, who gave up all,
Leading and lordship, in a heathen land
To fight a christian soldier—yet, in earnest,
I pray, De Vipont, you would join the Gordon
In this high battle. 'Tis a noble youth,
So fame doth vouch him,—amorous, quick, and valiant;
Takes knighthood, too, this day, and well may use
His spurs too rashly in the wish to win them.
A friend like thee beside him in the fight,
Were worth a hundred spears, to rein his valour
And temper it with prudence;—'tis the aged eagle
Teaches his brood to gaze upon the sun,
With eye undazzled.

Vip. Alas, brave Swinton, wouldst thou train the hunter
That soon must bring thee to the bay? your custom,
Your most unchristian, savage, fiend-like custom,
Binds Gordon to avenge his father's death.

Swin. Why, be it so! I look for nothing else:
My part was acted when I slew his father,
Avenging my four sons—Young Gordon's sword,
If it should find my heart, can ne'er inflict there
A pang so poignant as his father's did.
But I would perish by a noble hand,
And such will his be if he bear him nobly,
Nobly and wisely on this field of Halidon.

Enter a PURSUIVANT.

Pursuivant. Sir knights, to council!—'tis the regent's order,
That knights and men of leading meet him instantly
Before the royal standard. Edward's army
Is seen from the hill summit.

Swin. Say to the regent, we obey his orders.

[*Exit* PURSUIVANT.

[*To* REYNALD.] Hold thou my casque, and furl my pennon up
Close to the staff. I will not show my crest,
Nor standard, till the common foe shall challenge them.
I'll wake no civil strife, nor tempt the Gordon
With aught that's like defiance.

Vip. Will he not know your features?

Swin. He never saw me. In the distant north,
Against his will 'tis said, his friends detain'd him
During his nurture—caring not, belike,
To trust a pledge so precious near the boar-tusks.
It was a natural but needless caution:
I wage no war with children, for I think
Too deeply on mine own.

Vip. I have thought on it, and will see the Gordon
As we go hence to council. I do bear
A cross, which binds me to be christian priest,
As well as christian champion. God may grant,
That I, at once his father's friend and yours,
May make some peace betwixt you.

Swin. When that your priestly zeal, and knightly valour,
Shall force the grave to render up the dead.

[*Exeunt severally.*

SCENE II.

The summit of Halidon Hill, before the regent's tent. The royal standard of Scotland is seen in the back ground, with the pennons and banners of the principal nobles around it.

Council of Scottish nobles and chiefs. SUTHERLAND, ROSS, LENNOX, MAXWELL, *and other nobles of the highest rank, are close to the* REGENT'S *person, and in the act of keen debate.* VIPONT, *with Gordon and others, remain grouped at some distance on the right hand of the stage. On the left, standing also apart, is* SWINTON, *alone and bare-headed. The nobles are dressed in highland or lowland habits, as historical costume requires. Trumpets, Heralds, &c. are in attendance.*

Len. Nay, lordings, put no shame upon my counsels;
I did but say, if we retired a little,
We should have fairer field and better vantage.
I've seen king Robert,—ay, the Bruce himself—
Retreat six leagues in length, and think no shame on't.

Reg. Ay, but king Edward sent a haughty message,
Defying us to battle on this field,
This very hill of Halidon; if we leave it
Unfought withal, it squares not with our honour.

Swin. (*apart.*) A perilous honour, that allows the enemy,
And such an enemy as this same Edward,
To choose our field of battle! He knows how
To make our Scottish pride betray its master
Into the pitfall. [*During this speech the debate among the nobles seems to continue.*

Suth. (*aloud.*) We will not back one furlong—not one yard,
No, nor one inch; where'er we find the foe,
Or where the foe finds us, there will we fight him.
Retreat will dull the spirit of our followers,
Who now stand prompt for battle.

Ross. My lords, methinks great Morarchat has doubts,
That, if his northern clang once turn the seam
Of their cheek'd hose behind, it will be hard
To halt and rally them.

Suth. Say'st thou, Mac-Donnell?—add another falsehood,
And name when Morarchat was coward or traitor!
Thine island race, as chronicles can tell,
Were oft affianced to the southern cause;
Loving the weight and temper of their gold,
More than the weight and temper of their steel.

Reg. Peace, my lords, ho!

Ross, (*Throwing down his glove.*) Mac-Donnell will not peace! There lies my pledge,
Proud Morarchat, to witness thee a liar.

Max. Brought I all Nithsdale from the western border;
Left I my towers exposed to foraying England,
And thieving Annandale, to see such misrule?

John. Who speaks of Annandale? Dare Maxwell slander
The gentle house of Lochwood?

Reg. Peace, lordings, once again. We represent

The majesty of Scotland—in our presence
Brawling is treason.

Suth. Were it in presence of the king himself,
What should prevent my saying——.

Enter LINDESAY.

Lind. You must determine quickly. Scarce a mile
Parts our vanguard from Edward's. On the plain,
Bright gleams of armour flash thro' clouds of dust,
Like stars through frost-mist—steeds neigh, and weapons clash—
And arrows soon will whistle—the worst sound
That waits on English war.—You must determine.

Reg. We are determined. We will spare proud Edward
Half of the ground that parts us.—Onward, lords;
Saint Andrew strike for Scotland! We will lead
The middle ward ourselves, the royal standard
Display'd beside us; and beneath its shadow
Shall the young gallants whom we knight this day,
Fight for their golden spurs.—Lennox, thou'rt wise,
And wilt obey command—lead thou the rear.

Len. The rear!—why I the rear? The van were fitter
For him who fought abreast with Robert Bruce.

Swin. (*apart.*) Discretion hath forsaken Lennox too!
The wisdom he was forty years in gathering
Has left him in an instant. 'Tis contagious
Even to witness frenzy.

Suth. The regent hath determined well. The rear
Suits him the best who counsell'd our retreat.

Len. Proud northern thane, the van were soon the rear,
Were thy disordered followers planted there.

Suth. Then, for that very word, I make a vow,
By my broad earldom and my father's soul,
That if I have not leading of the van,
I will not fight to-day!

Ross. Morarchat! thou the leading of the van!
Not whilst Mac-Donnell lives.

Swin. (*apart.*) Nay, then a stone would speak.
[*Addresses the* REGENT.] May't please your grace,
And yours, great lords, to hear an old man's counsel.
That hath seen fights enow. These open bickerings
Dishearten all our host. If that your grace,
With these great earls and lords, must needs debate,
Let the closed tent conceal your disagreement;
Else 'twill be said, ill fares it with the flock,
If shepherds wrangle when the wolf is nigh.

Reg. The old knight counsels well. Let every lord
Or chief, who leads five hundred men or more,
Follow to council—others are excluded—
We'll have no vulgar censurers of our conduct.
[*Looking at* SWINTON.
Young Gordon, your high rank and numerous following
Give you a seat with us, though yet unknighted.

Gor. I pray you pardon me. My youth's unfit
To sit in council, when that knight's gray hairs
And wisdom wait without.

Reg. Do as you will; we deign not bid you twice.
[*The* REGENT, ROSS, SUTHERLAND, LENNOX, MAXWELL, &c. *enter the tent. The rest remain grouped about the stage.*

Gor. [*observing* SWINTON.] That helmetless old knight, his giant stature,
His awful accents of rebuke and wisdom,
Have caught my fancy strangely. He doth seem
Like to some vision'd form which I have dream'd of,
But never saw with waking eyes till now.
I will accost him.

Vip. Pray you, do not so;
Anon I'll give you reason why you should not.
There's other work in hand——

Gor. I will but ask his name. There's in his presence
Something that works upon me like a spell,
Or like the feeling made my childish ear
Doat upon tales of superstitious dread,
Attracting while they chill'd my heart with fear.
Now, born the Gordon, I do feel right well
I'm bound to fear nought earthly—and I fear nought.
I'll know who this man is——
[*Accosts* SWINTON.
Sir knight, I pray you, of your gentle courtesy,
To tell your honour'd name. I am ashamed,
Being unknown in arms, to say that mine
Is Adam Gordon.

Swin. (*shows emotion, but instantly subdues it.*)
It is a name that soundeth in my ear
Like to a death-knell—ay, and like the call
Of the shrill trumpet to the mortal lists;
Yet 'tis a name which ne'er hath been dishonour'd,
And never will, I trust—most surely never
By such a youth as thou.

Gor. There's a mysterious courtesy in this,
And yet it yields no answer to my question.
I trust, you hold the Gordon not unworthy
To know the name he asks?

Swin. Worthy of all that openness and honour
May show to friend or foe—but, for my name,
Vipont will show it you; and, if it sound
Harsh in your ear, remember that it knells there
But at your own request. This day, at least,
Though seldom wont to keep it in concealment,
As there's no cause I should, *you* had not heard it.

Gor. This strange——

Vip. The mystery is needful. Follow me.
[*They retire behind the side scene.*

Swin. (*looking after them.*) 'Tis a brave youth.
How blush'd his noble cheek,
While youthful modesty, and the embarrassment
Of curiosity, combined with wonder,
And half suspicion of some slight intended,
All mingled in the flush; but soon 'twill deepen
Into revenge's glow. How slow is Vipont!
I wait the issue, as I've seen spectators
Suspend the motion even of the eye-lids,
When the slow gunner, with his lighted match,
Approach'd the charged cannon, in the act
To waken its dread slumbers.—Now 'tis out;
He draws his sword, and rushes towards me,
Who will nor seek nor shun him.

Enter GORDON, *withheld by* VIPONT.

Vip. Hold, for the sake of heaven!—O, for the sake
Of your dear country, hold!—Has Swinton slain your father,
And must you, therefore, be yourself a parricide
And stand recorded as the selfish traitor,
Who, in her hour of need, his country's cause
Deserts, that he may wreak a private wrong?
Look to yon banner—that is Scotland's standard;
Look to the regent—he is Scotland's general;
Look to the English—they are Scotland's foemen!
Bethink thee, then, thou art a son of Scotland,
And think on nought beside.

Gor. He hath come here to brave me! Off!
Unhand me!
Thou canst not be my father's ancient friend,

That stand'st 'twixt me and him who slew my father.
Vip. You know not Swinton. Scarce one passing thought
Of his high mind was with you; now, his soul
Is fixed on this day's battle. You might slay him
At unawares before he saw your blade drawn.
Stand still, and watch him close.
Enter MAXWELL *from the tent.*
Swin. How go our councils, Maxwell, may I ask?
Max. As wild, as if the very wind and sea
With every breeze and every billow battled
For their precedence.
Swin. Most sure they are possess'd! Some evil spirit,
To mock their valour, robs them of discretion.
Fie, fie, upon't!—O that Dunfermline's tomb
Could render up the Bruce! that Spain's red shore
Could give us back the good lord James of Douglas!
Or that fierce Randolph, with his voice of terror,
Were here, to awe these brawlers to submission!
Vip. (*to* GORDON.) Thou hast perused him at more leisure now.
Gor. I see the giant form which all men speak of,
The stately port—but not the sullen eye,
Not the blood-thirsty look, that should belong
To him that made me orphan. I shall need
To name my father twice ere I can strike
At such gray hairs, and face of such command;
Yet my hand clenches on my falchion-hilt,
In token he shall die.
Vip. Need I again remind you, that the place
Permits not private quarrel?
Gor. I'm calm, I will not seek—nay, I will shun it—
And yet methinks that such debate's the fashion.
You've heard how taunts, reproaches, and the lie,
The lie itself, hath flown from mouth to mouth;
As if a band of peasants were disputing
About a foot-ball match, rather than chiefs
Were ordering a battle. I am young,
And lack experience; tell me, brave De Vipont,
Is such the fashion of your wars in Palestine?
Vip. Such it at times hath been; and then the cross
Hath sunk before the crescent. Heaven's cause
Won us not victory where wisdom was not.
Behold yon English host comes slowly on,
With equal front, rank marshall'd upon rank,
As if one spirit ruled one moving body;
The leaders, in their places, each prepared
To charge, support, and rally, as the fortune
Of changeful battle needs:—then look on ours,
Broken, disjointed, as the tumbling surges
Which the winds wake at random. Look on both,
And dread the issue;—yet there might be succour.
Gor. We're fearfully o'ermatch'd in discipline;
So even my inexperienced eye can judge.
What succour save in heaven?
Vip. Heaven acts by human means. The artist's skill
Supplies in war, as in mechanic crafts,
Deficiency of tools. There's courage, wisdom,
And skill enough, live in one leader here,
As, flung into the balance, might avail
To counterpoise the odds 'twixt that ruled host
And our wild multitude —I must not name him.
Gor. I guess, but dare not ask. What band is yonder,
Arranged as closely as the English discipline
Hath marshall'd their best files?
Vip. Know'st thou not the pennon'
One day, perhaps, thoul't see it all too closely,
It is sir Alan Swinton's.
Gor. These, then, are his,—the relics of his power;
Yet worth an host of ordinary men.
And I must slay my country's sagest leader,
And crush by numbers that determined handful,
When most my country needs their practised aid,
Or men will say, "There goes degenerate Gordon;
His father's blood is on the Swinton's sword,
And his is in his scabbard!" [*Muses.*
Vip. (*apart.*) High blood and mettle, mix'd with early wisdom,
Sparkle in this brave youth. If he survive
This evil-omened day, I pawn my word,
That, in the ruin which I now forebode,
Scotland has treasure left. How close he eyes
Each look and step of Swinton! Is it hate,
Or is it admiration, or are both
Commingled strangely in that steady gaze?
[SWINTON *and* MAXWELL *return from the bottom of the stage.*
Max. The storm is laid at length amongst these counsellors:
See, they come forth.
Swin. And it is more than time;
For I can mark the van-guard archery
Handling their quivers—bending up their bows
Enter the REGENT *and Scottish lords.*
Reg. Thus shall it be then, since we may no better:
And, since no lord will yield one jot of way
To this high urgency, or give the van-guard
Up to another's guidance, we will abide them
Even on this bent; and as our troops are rank'd,
So shall they meet the foe. Chief, nor thane,
Nor noble, can complain of the precedence
Which chance has thus assign'd him.
Swin. (*apart.*) O, sage discipline,
That leaves to chance the marshalling of a battle!
Gor. Move him to speech, De Vipont.
Vip. Move *him*!—Move whom?
Gor. Even him, whom, but brief space since,
My hand did burn to put to utter silence.
Vip. I'll move it to him. Swinton, speak to them,
They lack thy counsel sorely.
Swin. Had I the thousand spears which once I led,
I had not thus been silent. But men's wisdom
Is rated by their means. From the poor leader
Of sixty lances, who seeks words of weight?
Gor. (*steps forward.*) Swinton, there's that of wisdom on thy brow,
And valour in thine eye, and that of peril
In this most urgent hour, that bids me say,—
Bids me, thy mortal foe, say—Swinton, speak,
For king and country's sake!
Swin. Nay, if that voice commands me, speak I will;
It sounds as if the dead lay charge on me.
Reg. (*To* LENNOX, *with whom he has been consulting.*) 'Tis better than you think. This broad hill side
Affords fair compass for our power's display,
Rank above rank rising in seemly tiers;
So that the rear-ward stands as fair and open——
Swin. As e'er stood mark before an English archer.
Reg. Who dares to say so!—Who is't dare impeach
Our rule of discipline?

Swin. A poor knight of these marches, good my lord;
Alan of Swinton, who hath kept a house here,
He and his ancestry, since the old days
Of Malcolm, called the maiden.
Reg. You have brought here, even to this pitched field,
In which the royal banner is display'd,
I think, some sixty spears, sir knight of Swinton:
Our musters name no more.
Swin. I brought each man I had; and chief, or earl,
Thane, duke, or dignitary, brings no more:
And with them brought I what may here be useful—
An aged eye, which, what in England, Scotland,
Spain, France, and Flanders, hath seen fifty battles,
And ta'en some judgment of them; a stark hand too,
Which plays as with a straw with this same mace,
Which if a young arm here can wield more lightly,
I never more will offer word of counsel.
Len. Hear him, my lord; it is the noble Swinton—
He hath had high experience.
Max. He is noted
The wisest warrior 'twixt the Tweed and Solway,—
I do beseech you hear him.
John. Ay, hear the Swinton—hear stout old sir Alan;
Maxwell and Johnstone both agree for once.
Reg. Where's your impatience now?
Late you were all for battle, would not hear
Ourselves pronounce a word—and now you gaze
On yon old warrior, in his antique armour,
As if he were arisen from the dead,
To bring us Bruce's counsel for the battle.
Swin. 'Tis a proud word to speak; but he who fought
Long under Robert Bruce, may something guess,
Without communication with the dead,
At what he would have counsell'd.—Bruce had bidden ye
Review your battle-order, marshall'd broadly
Here on the bare hill-side, and bidden you mark
Yon clouds of southron archers, bearing down
To the green meadow-lands which stretch beneath—
The Bruce had warn'd you, not a shaft to-day
But shall find mark within a Scottish bosom,
If thus our field be order'd. The callow boys,
Who draw but four-foot bows, shall gall our front,
While on our mainward, and upon the rear,
The cloth-yard shafts shall fall like death's own darts,
And, tho' blind men discharge them, find a mark.
Thus shall we die the death of slaughter'd deer,
Which, driven into the toils, are shot at ease
By boys and women, while they toss aloft
All idly and in vain their branchy horns,
As we shall shake our unavailing spears.
Reg. Tush, tell not me! If their shot fall like hail,
Our men have Milan coats to bear it out.
Swin. Never did armourer temper steel on stithy
That made sure fence against an English arrow;
A cobweb gossamer were guard as good
Against a wasp-sting.
Reg. Who fears a wasp-sting?
Swin. I, my lord, fear none;
Yet should a wise man brush the insect off,
Or he may smart for it.

Reg. We'll keep the hill; it is the vantage ground
When the main battle joins.
Swin. It ne'er will join, while their light archery
Can foil our spear-men and our barbed horse.
To hope Plantagenet would seek close combat
When he can conquer riskless, is to deem
Sagacious Edward simpler than a babe
In battle-knowledge. Keep the hill, my lord,
With the main body, if it is your pleasure;
But let a body of your chosen horse
Make execution on yon waspish archers.
I've done such work before, and love it well;
If 'tis your pleasure to give me the leading,
The dames of Sherwood, Inglewood, and Weardale,
Shall sit in widowhood and long for venison,
And long in vain. Whoe'er remembers Bannockburn,—
And when shall Scotsman, till the last loud trumpet,
Forget that stirring word!—knows *that* great battle
Even thus was fought and won.
Len. This is the shortest road to bandy blows;
For when the bills step forth and bows go back,
Then is the moment that our hardy spearmen,
With their strong bodies, and their stubborn hearts,
And limbs well knit by mountain exercise,
At the close tug shall foil the short-breathed southron.
Swin. I do not say the field will thus be won;
The English host is numerous, brave, and loyal;
Their monarch most accomplish'd in war's art,
Skill'd, resolute, and wary——
Reg. And if your scheme secure not victory,
What does it promise us?
Swin. This much at least,—
Darkling we shall not die; the peasant's shaft,
Loosen'd perchance without an aim or purpose,
Shall not drink up the life-blood we derive
From those famed ancestors, who made their breasts
This frontier's barrier for a thousand years.
We'll meet these southrons bravely hand to hand,
And eye to eye, and weapon against weapon;
Each man who falls shall see the foe who strikes him.
While our good blades are faithful to the hilts,
And our good hands to these good blades are faithful,
Blow shall meet blow, and none fall unavenged—
We shall not bleed alone.
Reg. And this is all
Your wisdom hath devised!
Swin. Not all; for I would pray you, noble lords,
(If one, among the guilty guiltiest, might,)
For this one day to charm to ten hours' rest
The never-dying worm of deadly feud,
That gnaws our vexed hearts—think no one foe
Save Edward and his host—days will remain,
Ay, days by far too many will remain,
To avenge old feuds or struggles for precedence;
Let this one day be Scotland's. For myself,
If there is any here may claim from me
(As well may chance) a debt of blood and hatred,
My life is his to-morrow unresisting,
So he to-day will let me do the best
That my old arm may achieve for the dear country
That's mother to us both.

[GORDON *shows much emotion during this and the preceding speech of* SWINTON.

Reg. It is a dream—a vision!—If one troop
Rush down upon the archers, all will follow,
And order is destroy'd—we'll keep the battle-rank
Our fathers wont to do. No more on't.—Ho!

Where be those youths seek knighthood from our sword?
Her. Here are the Gordon, Somerville, and Hay,
And Hepburn, with a score of gallants more.
Reg. Gordon, stand forth.
Gor. I pray your grace, forgive me.
Reg. How! seek you not for knighthood?
Gor. I do thirst for't.
But, pardon me—'tis from another sword.
Reg. It is your sovereign's—seek you for a worthier?
Gor. Who would drink purely, seeks the secret fountain,
How small soever—not the general stream,
Though it be deep and wide. My lord, I seek
The boon of knighthood from the honour'd weapon
Of the best knight, and of the sagest leader,
That ever graced a ring of chivalry.
—Therefore, I beg the boon on bended knee,
Even from sir Alan Swinton. [*Kneels.*
Reg. Degenerate boy! Abject at once and insolent!—
See, lords, he kneels to him that slew his father!
Gor. (*starting up.*) Shame be on him who speaks such shameful word!
Shame be on him whose tongue would sow dissension,
When most the time demands that native Scotsmen
Forget each private wrong!
Swin. (*interrupting him.*) Youth, since you crave me
To be your sire in chivalry, I remind you
War has its duties, office has its reverence;
Who governs in the sovereign's name is sovereign,
Crave the lord regent's pardon.
Gor. You task me justly, and I crave his pardon,
[*Bows to the* REGENT.
His and these noble lords'; and pray them all
Bear witness to my words.—Ye noble presence,
Here I remit unto the knight of Swinton
All bitter memory of my father's slaughter,
All thoughts of malice, hatred, and revenge;
By no base fear or composition moved,
But by the thought, that in our country's battle
All hearts should be as one. I do forgive him
As freely as I pray to be forgiven,
And once more kneel to him to sue for knighthood.
Swin. (*affected, and drawing his sword.*) Alas! brave youth, 'tis I should kneel to you,
And, tendering thee the hilt of the fell sword
That made thee fatherless, bid thee use the point
After thine own discretion. For thy boon—
Trumpets be ready—In the holiest name,
And in our lady's and saint Andrew's name,
[*Touching his shoulder with the sword.*
I dub thee knight! Arise, sir Adam Gordon!
Be faithful, brave, and O be fortunate,
Should this ill hour permit!
[*The trumpets sound; the heralds cry,* "Largessee;" *and the attendants shout,* "A Gordon! A Gordon!"
Reg. Beggars and flatterers! Peace, peace, I say!
We'll to the standard: knights shall there be made
Who will with better reason crave your clamour.
Len. What of Swinton's council?
Here's Maxwell and myself think it worth noting.
Reg. (*with concentrated indignation.*) Let the best knight, and let the sagest leader,—
So Gordon quotes the man who slew his father,—
With his old pedigree and heavy mace,
Essay the adventure if it pleases him,
With his fair threescore horse. As for ourselves,
We will not peril aught upon the measure.
Gor. Lord regent, you mistake; for if sir Alan
Shall venture such attack, each man who calls
The Gordon chief, and hopes or fears from him
Or good, or evil, follows Swinton's banner
In this achievement.
Reg. Why, God ha' mercy! This is of a piece.
Let young and old e'en follow their own counsel,
Since none will list to mine.
Ross. The border cockerel fain would be on horseback:
'Tis safe to be prepared for fight or flight:
And this comes of it to give northern lands
To the false Norman blood.
Gor. Hearken, proud chief of Isles! Within my stalls
I have two hundred horse; two hundred riders
Mount guard upon my castle, who would tread
Into the dust a thousand of your redshanks,
Nor count it a day's service.
Swin. Hear I this
From thee, young man, and on the day of battle?
And to the brave Mac-Donnell?
Gor. 'Twas he that urged me; but I am rebuked.
Reg. He crouches like a leash-hound to his master!
Swin. Each hound must do so that would head the deer—
'Tis mongrel curs which snatch at mate or master.
Reg. Too much of this.—Sirs, to the royal standard!
I bid you, in the name of good king David,
Sound trumpets—sound for Scotland and king David!
[*The* REGENT *and the rest go off, and the scene closes. Manent* GORDON, SWINTON, *and* VIPONT, *with* REYNALD *and followers.* LENNOX *follows the* REGENT; *but returns and addresses* SWINTON.
Len. O, were my western horsemen but come up,
I would take part with you!
Swin. Better that you remain.
They lack discretion; such gray head as yours
May best supply that want.
Lennox, mine ancient friend, and honour'd lord,
Farewell, I think, forever!
Len. Farewell, brave friend!—and farewell, noble Gordon,
Whose sun will be eclipsed even as it rises!
The regent will not aid you.
Swin. We will so bear us, that as soon the blood-hound
Shall halt, and take no part, what time his comrade
Is grapling with the deer, as he stand still,
And see us overmatch'd.
Len. Alas! thou dost not know how mean his pride is,
How strong his envy.
Swin. Then will we die, and leave the shame with him. [*Exit* LENNOX.
Vip. (*to* GORDON.) What ails thee, noble youth? What means this pause?
Thou dost not rue thy generosity?
Gor. I have been hurried on by a strong impulse,
Like to a bark that scuds before the storm,
Till driven upon some strange and distant coast,
Which never pilot dream'd of. Have I not forgiven?

And am I not still fatherless!
Swin. Gordon, no;
For while we live, I am a father to thee.
Gor. Thou, Swinton? no! that cannot, cannot be.
Swin. Then change the phrase, and say, that while we live,
Gordon shall be my son. If thou art fatherless,
Am I not childless too? Bethink thee, Gordon,
Our death-feud was not like the household fire,
Which the poor peasant hides among its embers,
To smoulder on, and wait a time for waking.
Ours was the conflagration of the forest,
Which, in its fury, spares nor sprout nor stem,
Hoar oak, nor sapling—not to be extinguish'd,
Till heaven, in mercy, sends down all her waters.
But, once subdued, it's flame is quench'd for ever;
And spring shall hide the track of devastation,
With foliage and with flowers. Give me thy hand.
Gor. My hand and heart!—And freely now—to fight!
Vip. How will you act? [*To* SWINTON.] The Gordon's band and thine
Are in the rearward left, I think, in scorn.
Ill post for them who wish to charge the foremost!
Swin. We'll turn that scorn to vantage, and descend
Sidelong the hill—some winding path there must be.
O, for a well-skill'd guide!
HOB HATTELY *starts up from a thicket.*
Hob. So here he stands.—An ancient friend, sir Alan.
Hob Hattely, or, if you like it better,
Hob of the Heron Plume, here stands your guide!
Swin. An ancient friend?—A most notorious knave,
Whose throat I've destined to the dodder'd oak
Before my castle, these ten months and more.
Was it not you, who drove from Simprim-mains,
And Swinton-quarter, sixty head of cattle?
Hob. What then? If now I lead your sixty lances
Upon the English flank, where they'll find spoil
Is worth six hundred beeves?
Swin. Why, thou canst do it, knave. I would not trust thee
With one poor bullock; yet would risk my life,
And all my followers, on thine honest guidance.
Hob. There is a dingle, and a most discreet one,
(I've trod each step by starlight,) that sweeps round
The rearward of this hill, and opens secretly
Upon the archers' flank. Will not that serve
Your present turn, sir Alan?
Swin. Bravely, bravely!
Gor. Mount, sirs, and cry my slogan.
Let all who love the Gordon follow me!
Swin. Ay, let all follow—but in silence follow.
Scare not the hare that's couchant on her form—
The cushat from her nest—brush not, if possible,
The dew-drop from the spray—
Let no one whisper, until I cry, "Havoc!"
Then shout as loud's ye will.—On, on, brave Hob;
On, thou false thief, but yet most faithful Scotsman!

ACT II.—SCENE I.

A rising ground immediately in front of the position of the English main body. PERCY, CHANDOS, RIBAUMONT, *and other English and Norman nobles are grouped on the stage.*

Per. The Scots still keep the hill—the sun grows high.
Would that the charge would sound!
Chan. Thou scent'st the slaughter, Percy.
Who comes here?
Enter the ABBOT OF WALTHAMSTOW.
Now, by my life, the holy priest of Walthamstow,
Like to a lamb among a herd of wolves!
See, he's about to bleat.
Ab. The king, methinks, delays the onset long.
Chan. Your general, father, like your rat-catcher,
Pauses to bait his traps, and set his snares.
Ab. The metaphor is descent.
Chan. Reverend sir,
I will uphold it just. Our good king Edward
Will presently come to this battle-field,
And speak to you of the last tilting match,
Or of some feat he did a twenty years since;
But not a word of the day's work before him.
Even as the artist, sir, whose name offends you,
Sits prosing o'er his can, until the trap fall,
Announcing that the vermin are secured,
And then 'tis up, and on them.
Per. Chandos, you give your tongue too bold a license.
Chan. Percy, I am a necessary evil.
King Edward would not want me, if he could,
And could not, if he would. I know my value;
My heavy hand excuses my light tongue.
So men wear weighty swords in their defence,
Although they may offend the tender shin,
When the steel boot is doff'd.
Ab. My lord of Chandos,
This is but idle speech on brink of battle,
When christian men should think upon their sins:
For as the tree falls, so the trunk must lie,
Be it for good or evil. Lord, bethink thee,
Thou hast withheld from our most reverend house,
The tithes of Everingham and Settleton;
Wilt thou make satisfaction to the church
Before her thunders strike thee? I do warn thee
In most paternal sort.
Chan. I thank you, father, filially,
Though but a truant son of holy church,
I would not choose to undergo her censures,
When Scottish blades are waving at my throat.
I'll make fair composition.
Ab. No composition; I'll have all or none.
Chan. None, then—'tis soonest spoke. I'll take my chance,
And trust my sinful soul to heaven's mercy,
Rather than risk my worldly goods with thee—
My hour may not be come.
Ab. Impious—impenitent—
Per. Hush! the king—the king!
Enter KING EDWARD, *attended by* BALIOL, *and others.*
King. (*apart to* CHANDOS.) Hark hither, Chandos!—Have the Yorkshire archers
Yet join'd the vanguard?
Chan. They are marching thither.
K. Ed. Bid them make haste, for shame—send a quick rider.—
The loitering knaves, were it to steal my venison,
Their steps were light enough.—How now, sir abbot?
Say, is your reverence come to study with us
The princely art of war?
Ab. I've had a lecture from my lord of Chandos,
In which he term'd your grace a rat-cather.
K. Ed. Chandos, how's this?

Chan. O, I will prove it, sir!—These skipping Scots
Have changed a dozen times 'twixt Bruce and Baliol,
Quitting each house when it began to totter:
They're fierce and cunning, treacherous, too, as rats,
And we, as such, will smoke them in their fastnesses.
K. Ed. These rats have seen your back, my lord of Chandos,
And noble Percy's too.
Per. Ay; but the mass which now lies weltering
On yon hill side, like a Leviathan
That's stranded on the shallows, then had soul in't,
Order and discipline, and power of action.
Now 'tis a headless corpse, which only shows,
By wild convulsions, that some life remains in't.
K. Ed. True, they had once a head; and 'twas a wise
Although a rebel head.
Ab. (*bowing to the* KING.) Would he were here! we should find one to match him.
K. Ed. There's something in that wish which wakes an echo
Within my bosom. Yet it is as well,
Or better, that the Bruce is in his grave.
We have enough of powerful foes on earth,
No need to summon them from other worlds.
Per. Your grace ne'er met the Bruce?
K. Ed. Never himself; but, in my earliest field,
I did encounter with his famous captains,
Douglas and Randolph. Faith! they press'd me hard.
Ab. My liege, if I might urge you with a question,
Will the Scots fight to-day?
K. Ed. (*sharply.*) Go look your breviary.
Chan. (*apart.*) The abbot has it—Edward will not answer
On that nice point. We must observe his humour.—
[*Addresses the* KING.
Your first campaign, my liege?—That was in Weardale,
When Douglas gave our camp yon midnight ruffle,
And turn'd men's beds to biers.
K. Ed. Ay, by saint Edward!—I escaped right nearly.
I was a soldier then for holidays,
And slept not in mine armour: my safe rest
Was startled by the cry of Douglas! Douglas!
And by my couch, a grisly chamberlain,
Stood Alan Swinton, with his bloody mace.
It was a churchman saved me—my stout chaplain,
Heaven quit his spirit! caught a weapon up,
And grappled with the giant.—How now, Louis?
Enter an officer, who whispers the KING.
K. Ed. Say to him,—thus—and thus——
[*Whispers.*
Ab. That Swinton's dead, a monk of ours reported,
Bound homeward from saint Ninian's pilgrimage,
The lord of Gordon slew him.
Per. Father, and if your house stood on our borders,
You might have cause to know that Swinton lives,
And is on horseback yet.
Chan. He slew the Gordon,
That's all the difference—a very trifle.
Ab. Trifling to those who wage a war more noble
Than with the arm of flesh.
Chan. (*apart.*) The abbot's vex'd, I'll rub the sore for him.
(*Aloud.*) I have used that arm of flesh,
And used it sturdily—most reverend father,
What say you to the chaplain's deed of arms
In the king's tent at Weardale?
Ab. It was most sinful, being against the canon
Prohibiting all churchmen to bear weapons;
And as he fell in that unseemly guise,
Perchance his soul may rue it.
King. (*overhearing the last words.*) Who may rue?
And what is to be rued?
Chan. (*apart.*) I'll match his reverence for the tithes of Everingham.
The abbot says, my liege, the deed was sinful
By which your chaplain, wielding secular weapons,
Secured your grace's life and liberty,
And that he suffers for't in purgatory.
King. (*to the* ABBOT.) Say'st thou my chaplain is in purgatory?
Ab. It is the canon speaks it, good my liege.
King. In purgatory! thou shalt pray him out on't,
Or I will make thee wish thyself beside him.
Ab. My lord, perchance his soul is past the aid
Of all the church may do—there is a place
From which there's no redemption.
King. And if I thought my faithful chaplain there,
Thou shouldst there join him, priest!—Go, watch, fast, pray,
And let me have such prayers as will storm heaven—
None of your maim'd and mutter'd hunting masses.
Ab. (*apart to* CHANDOS.) For God's sake, take him off.
Chan. Wilt thou compound, then,
The tithes of Everingham?
King. I tell thee, if thou bear'st the keys of heaven,
Abbot, thou shalt not turn a bolt with them
'Gainst any well-deserving English subject.
Ab. (*to* CHANDOS.) We will compound, and grant thee, too, a share
I' the next indulgence. Thou dost need it much,
And greatly 'twill avail thee.
Chan. Enough—we're friends, and when occasion serves,
I will strike in.——
[*Looks as if towards the Scottish army.*
King. Answer, proud abbot, is my chaplain's soul,
If thou knowest aught on't, in the evil place?
Chan. My liege, the Yorkshire men have gain'd the meadow.
I see the pennon green of merry Sherwood.
King. Then give the signal instant. We have lost
But too much time already.
Ab. My liege, your holy chaplain's blessed soul——
King. To hell with it, and thee! Is this a time
To speak of monks and chaplains?
[*Flourish of trumpets, answered by a distant sound of bugles.*
See, Chandos, Percy—Ha, saint George! saint Edward!
See it descending now, the fatal hail shower,
The storm of England's wrath—sure, swift, resistless,
Which no mail-coat can brook. Brave English hearts!
How close they shoot together!—as one eye
Had aimed five thousand shafts—as if one hand
Had loosed five thousand bow-strings!
Per. The thick volley

Darkens the air, and hides the sun from us.
King. It falls on those shall see the sun no more.
The winged, the resistless plague is with them.
How their vex'd host is reeling to and fro,
Like the chafed whale with fifty lances in him!
They do not see, and cannot shun the wound.
The storm is viewless, as death's sable wing,
Unerring as his sithe.
Per. Horses and riders are going down together.
'Tis almost pity to see nobles fall,
And by a peasant's arrow.
Bal. I could weep them,
Although they are my rebels.
Chan. (*aside to* PERCY.) His conquerors, he means, who cast him out
From his usurp'd kingdom. (*Aloud.*) 'Tis the worst of it,
That knights can claim small honour in the field
Which archers win, unaided by our lances.
King. The battle is not ended. [*Looks towards the field.*
Not ended!—scarce begun!—What horse are these,
Rush from the thicket underneath the hill?
Per. They're Hainaulters, the followers of queen Isabel.
King. (*hastily.*) Hainaulters!—thou art blind—wear Hainaulters
Saint Andrew's silver cross?—or would they charge
Full on our archers, and make havoc of them?
Bruce is alive again—ho, rescue! rescue!
Who was't surveyed the ground?
Ribau. Most royal liege—
King. A rose hath fallen from thy chaplet,[1] Ribaumont.
Ribau. I'll win it back, or lay my head beside it.
[*Exit.*
King. Saint George! saint Edward! Gentlemen, to horse,
And to the rescue! Percy, lead the hill-men;
Chandos, do thou bring up the men-at-arms.
If yonder numerous host should now bear down
Bold as their van-guard, (*to the abbot,*) thou may'st pray for us,
We may need good men's prayers. To the rescue,
Lords, to the rescue! ha, saint George! saint Edward! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

A part of the Field of Battle betwixt the two Main Armies; tumults behind the scenes; alarms, and cries of "Gordon! a Gordon!" "Swinton!" &c.

Enter, as victorious over the English van-guard, VIPONT, REYNALD, *and others.*
Vip. 'Tis sweet to hear these war-cries sound together,—
Gordon and Swinton.
Rey. 'Tis passing pleas- t, yet 'tis strange withal.
Faith, when at first I heard the Gordon's slogan
Sounded so near me, I had nigh struck down
The knave who cried it.

Enter SWINTON *and* GORDON.

Swin. Pitch down my pennon in yon holly bush.
Gor. Mine in the thorn beside it; let them wave,
As fought this morn their masters, side by side.
Swin. let the men rally, and restore their ranks
Here on this vantage-ground—disorder'd chase
Leads to disorder'd flight; we have done our part,
And if we're succour'd now, Plantagenet
Must turn his bridle southward.
Reynald, spur to the regent with the basnet
Of stout De Grey, the leader of their van-guard;
Say, that in battle-front the Gordon slew him,
And by that token bid him send us succour.
Gor. And tell him that when Selby's headlong charge
Had well nigh borne me down, sir Alan smote him.
I cannot send his helmet, never nutshell
Went to so many shivers.—Hark'ye, grooms!
[*To those behind the scenes*
Why do you let my noble steed stand stiffening
After so hot a course?
Swin. Ay, breathe your horses, they'll have work anon,
For Edward's men-at-arms will soon be on us,
The flower of England, Gascony, and Flanders;
But with swift succour we will bide them bravely.
De Vipont, thou look'st sad!
Vip. It is because I hold a templar's sword
Wet to the crossed hilt with christian blood.
Swin. The blood of English archers—what can gild
A Scottish blade more bravely?
Vip. Even therefore grieve I for those gallant yeomen,
England's peculiar and appropriate sons,
Known in no other land. Each boasts his hearth
And field as free as the best lord his barony,
Owing subjection to no human vassalage,
Save to their king and law. Hence are they resolute,
Leading the van on every day of battle,
As men who know the blessings they defend.
Hence are they frank and generous in peace,
As men who have their portion in its plenty.
No other kingdom shows such worth and happiness
Veil'd in such low estate—therefore I mourn them.
Swin. I'll keep my sorrow for our native Scots,
Who, spite of hardship, poverty, oppression,
Still follow to the field their chieftain's banner,
And die in the defence on't.
Gor. And if I live and see my halls again,
They shall have portion in the good they fight for.
Each hardy follower shall have his field,
His household hearth and sod-built home, as free
As ever southron had. They shall be happy!
And my Elizabeth shall smile to see it!
I have betray'd myself.
Swin. Do not believe it.
Vipont, do thou look out from yonder height,
And see what motion in the Scottish host,
And in king Edward's. [*Exit* VIPONT.
Now will I counsel thee;
The templar's ear is for no tale of love,
Being wedded to his order. But I tell thee,
The brave young knight that hath no lady-love
Is like a lamp unlighted; his brave deeds,
And its rich painting, do seem then most glorious,
When the pure ray gleams through them.
Hath thy Elizabeth no other name?
Gor. Must I then speak of her to you, sir Alan?
The thought of thee, and of thy matchless strength,
Hath conjured phantoms up amongst her dreams.
The name of Swinton hath been spell sufficient
To chase the rich blood from her lovely cheek,
And would'st thou now know her's?
Swin. I would, nay, must.
Thy father in the paths of chivalry
Should know the load-star thou dost rule thy course by.
Gor. Nay, then, her name is—hark——[*Whispers.*
Swin. I know it well, that ancient northern house.

Gor. O, thou shalt see its fairest grace and honour,
In my Elizabeth. And if music touch thee——
Swin. It did, before disasters had untuned me.
Gor. O, her notes
Shall hush each sad remembrance to oblivion,
Or melt them to such gentleness of feeling,
That grief shall have its sweetness. Who, but she,
Knows the wild harpings of our native land?
Whether they lull the shepherd on his hill,
Or wake the knight to battle; rouse to merriment,
Or sooth to sadness; she can touch each mood.
Princes and statesmen, chiefs renown'd in arms,
And gray-hair'd bards, contend which shall the first
And choicest homage render to th' enchantress.
Swin. You speak her talent bravely.
Gor. Though you smile,
I do not speak it half. Her gift creative
New measures adds to every air she wakes;
Varying and gracing it with liquid sweetness,
Like the wild modulation of the lark,
Now leaving, now returning to the strain!—
To listen to her, is to seem to wander
In some enchanted labyrinth of romance,
Whence nothing but the lovely fairy's will,
Who wove the spell, can extricate the wanderer:
Methinks I hear her now!—
Swin. Bless'd privilege
Of youth! There's scarce three minutes to decide
'Twixt death and life, 'twixt triumph and defeat,
Yet all his thoughts are in his lady's bower,
Listn'ing her harping!——
Enter VIPONT.
Where are thine, De Vipont?
Vip. On death—on judgment—on eternity!
For time is over with us.
Swin. There moves not then one pennon to our aid,
Of all that flutter yonder?
Vip. From the main English host come rushing forward
Pennons enow—ay, and their royal standard.
But ours stand rooted, as for crows to roost on.
Swin. (*to himself.*) I'll rescue him at least. Young lord of Gordon,
Spur to the regent—show the instant need——
Gor. I penetrate thy purpose; but I go not.
Swin. Not at my bidding? I, thy sire in chivalry—
Thy leader in the battle?—I command thee.
Gor. No, thou wilt not command me seek my safety,
For such is thy kind meaning, at the expense
Of the last hope which heaven reserves for Scotland.
While I abide, no follower of mine
Will turn his rein for life; but were I gone,
What power can stay them? and, our band dispersed,
What sword shall for an instant stem yon host,
And save the latest chance for victory?
Vip. The noble youth speaks truth; and were he gone,
There will not twenty spears be left with us.
Gor. No, bravely as we have begun the field,
So let us fight it out. The regent's eyes,
More certain than a thousand messages,
Shall see us stand, the barrier of his host
Against yon bursting storm. If not for honour,
If not for warlike rule, for shame at least,
He must bear down to aid us.
Swin. Must it be so?
And am I forced to yield the sad consent,
Devoting thy young life? O, Gordon, Gordon!
I do it as the patriarch doom'd his issue;
I at my country's, he at heaven's command;
But I seek vainly some atoning sacrifice,
Rather than such a victim!—(*Trumpets.*) Hark, they come!
That music sounds not like thy lady's lute.
Gor. Yet shall my lady's name mix with it gayly.
Mount, vassals, couch your lances, and cry, "Gordon!
Gordon for Scotland and Elizabeth!"
[*Exeunt. Loud alarum.*

SCENE III.

Another part of the Field of Battle, adjacent to the former scene.

Alarums. Enter SWINTON, *followed by* HOB HATTELY.

Swin. Stand to it yet! The man who flies to-day,
May bastards warm them at his household hearth!
Hob Hat. That ne'er shall be my curse. My Magdalen
Is trusty as my broadsword.
Swin. Ha, thou knave,
Art thou dismounted too!
Hob. Hat. I know, sir Alan,
You want no homeward guide; so threw my reins
Upon my palfrey's neck, and let him loose.
Within an hour he stands before my gate:
And Magdalen will need no other token
To bid the Melrose monks say masses for me.
Swin. Thou art resolved to cheat the halter, then?
Hob Hat. It is my purpose,
Having lived a thief, to die a brave man's death;
And never had I a more glorious chance for't.
Swin. Here lies the way to it, knave.—Make in, make in,
And aid young Gordon!
[*Exeunt. Loud and long alarums. After which the back scene rises, and discovers* SWINTON *on the ground,* GORDON *supporting him; both much wounded.*
Swin. All are cut down—the reapers have pass'd o'er us,
And hie to distant harvest. My toil's over;
There lies my sickle, [*dropping his sword,*] hand of mine again
Shall never, never wield it!
Gor. O valiant leader, is thy light extinguish'd!
That only beacon flame which promised safety
In this day's deadly wreck!
Swin. My lamp hath long been dim. But thine, young Gordon,
Just kindled, to be quench'd so suddenly,
Ere Scotland saw its splendour!——
Gor. Five thousand horse hung idly on yon hill,
Saw us o'erpowered, and no one stirr'd to aid us.
Swin. It was the regent's envy—Out!—alas!
Why blame I him?—It was our civil discord,
Our selfish vanity, our jealous hatred,
Which framed this day of dole for our poor country.
Had thy brave father held yon leading staff,
As well his rank and valour might have claim'd it,
We had not fall'n unaided. How, O how
Is he to answer it, whose deed prevented!
Gor. Alas! Alas! the author of the death-feud,
He has his reckoning too! for had your sons
And num'rous vassals liv'd, we had lack'd no aid.

Swin. May God assoil the dead, and him who follows!
We've drank the poison'd beverage which we brew'd;
Have sown the wind, and reap'd the tenfold whirlwind!
But thou, brave youth, whose nobleness of heart
Pour'd oil upon the wounds our hate inflicted;
Thou, who hast done no wrong, need'st no forgiveness,
Why should'st thou share our punishment?

Gor. All need forgiveness—[*distant alarums*]—Hark! in yonder shout
Did the main battles counter!

Swin. Look on the field, brave Gordon, if thou canst,
And tell me how the day goes. But I guess,
Too surely do I guess——

Gor. All's lost! all's lost! Of the main Scottish host,
Some wildly fly, and some rush wildly forward;
And some there are who seem to turn their spears
Against their countrymen.

Swin. Rashness, and cowardice, and secret treason,
Combine to ruin us; and our hot valour,
Devoid of discipline, is madmen's strength,
More fatal unto friends than enemies!
I'm glad that these dim eyes shall see no more on't.
Let thy hand close them, Gordon—I will think
My fair-hair'd William renders me that office!
[*Dies.*

Gor. And, Swinton, I will think I do that duty
To my dead father.

Enter De Vipont.

Vip. Fly, fly, brave youth! A handful of thy followers,
The scattered gleaning of this desperate day,
Still hover yonder to essay thy rescue.
O linger not!—I'll be your guide to them.

Gor. Look there, and bid me fly!—The oak has fallen!
And the young ivy bush, which learn'd to climb
By its support, must needs partake its fall!

Vip. Swinton? alas! the best, the bravest, strongest,
And sagest of our Scottish chivalry!
Forgive one moment, if to save the living,
My tongue should wrong the dead. Gordon, bethink thee,
Thou dost but stay to perish with the corpse
Of him who slew thy father.

Gor. Ay, but he was my sire in chivalry!
He taught my youth to soar above the promptings
Of mean and selfish vengeance; gave my youth
A name that shall not die even on this death-spot.
Records shall tell this field had not been lost,
Had all men fought like Swinton and like Gordon.
Save thee, De Vipont—Hark! the southron trumpets.

Vip. Nay, without thee, I stir not.

Enter Edward, Chandos, Percy, Baliol, &c.

Gor. Ay, they come on, the tyrant and the traitor,
Workman and tool, Plantagenet and Baliol.
O for a moment's strength in this poor arm,
To do one glorious deed.
[*He rushes on the English, but is made prisoner with* Vipont.

King. Disarm them—harm them not; though it was they
Made havoc on the archers of our van-guard,
They and that bulky champion. Where is he?

Chan. Here lies the giant! Say his name, young knight!

Gor. Let it suffice, he was a man this morning.

Chan. I question'd thee in sport. I do not need
Thy information, youth. Who that has fought
Through all these Scottish wars, but knows that crest,
The sable boar chain'd to the leafy oak,
And that huge mace still seen where war was wildest.

King. 'Tis Alan Swinton!
Grim chamberlain, who in my tent at Weardale,
Stood by my startled couch with torch and mace,
When the black Douglas war-cry waked my camp.

Gor. (*sinking down.*) If thus thou know'st him,
Thou wilt respect his corpse.

King. As belted knight and crowned king, I will.

Gor. And let mine
Sleep at his side, in token that our death
Ended the feud of Swinton and of Gordon.

King. It is the Gordon!—Is there aught beside
Edward can do to honour bravery,
Even in an enemy?

Gor. Nothing but this:
Let not base Baliol, with his touch or look,
Profane my corpse or Swinton's. I've some breath still,
Enough to say—Scotland—Elizabeth! [*Dies.*

Chan. Baliol, I would not brook such dying looks
To buy the crown you aim at.

King. (*to* Vipont.) Vipont, thy crossed shield shows ill in warfare
Against a christian king.

Vip. That christian king is warring upon Scotland.
I was a Scotsman ere I was a templar,[2]
Sworn to my country ere I knew my order.

King. I will but know thee as a christian champion,
And set thee free unramsom'd.

Enter abbot of Walthamstow.

Ab. Heaven grant your majesty
Many such glorious days as this has been!

King. It is a day of much advantage;
Glorious it might have been, had all our foes
Fought like these two brave champions.—Strike the drums,
Sound trumpets, and pursue the fugitives,
Till the Tweed's eddies whelm them. Berwick's rendered—
These wars, I trust, will soon find lasting close.

NOTES.

1. A rose hath fallen from thy chaplet.—P. 397.

The well-known expression by which Robert Bruce censured the negligence of Randolph, for permitting an English body of cavalry to pass his flank on the day preceding the battle of Bannockburn.

2. I was a Scotsman ere I was a templar.—P. 399.

A Venetian general observing his soldiers testified some unwillingness to fight against those of the pope, whom they regarded as father of the church, addressed them in terms of similar encouragement:—"Fight on! we were Venetians before we were christians."

Ballads and Lyrical Pieces.

GLENFINLAS;
OR
LORD RONALD'S CORONACH.*

For them the viewless forms of air obey,
Their bidding heed, and at their beck repair;
They know what spirit brews the stormful day,
And heartless oft, like moody madness, stare,
To see the phantom train their secret work prepare.

The tradition upon which the following stanzas are founded runs thus: While two highland hunters were passing the night in a solitary *bathy* (a hut built for the purpose of hunting,) and making merry over their venison and whisky, one of them expressed a wish, that they had pretty lasses to complete their party. The words were scarcely uttered, when two beautiful young women, habited in green, entered the hut, dancing and singing. One of the hunters was seduced by the syren, who attached herself particularly to him, to leave the hut: the other remained, and, suspicious of the fair seducers, continued to play upon a trump, or Jew's harp, some strain consecrated to the virgin Mary. Day at length came, and the temptress vanished. Searching in the forest, he found the bones of his unfortunate friend, who had been torn to pieces and devoured by the fiend, into whose toils he had fallen. The place was from thence called, *the Glen of the Green Women.*

Glenfinlas is a tract of forest ground, lying in the highlands of Perthshire, not far from Callender, in Menteith. It was formerly a royal forest, and now belongs to the earl of Moray. This country, as well as the adjacent district of Balquidder, was, in times of yore, chiefly inhabited by the Macgregors. To the west of the forest of Glenfinlas lies Loch Katrine, and its romantic avenue called the Trosachs. Benledi, Benmore, and Benvoirlich, are mountains in the same district, and at no great distance from Glenfinlas. The river Teith passes Callender and the castle of Doune, and joins the Forth near Stirling. The pass of Lenny is immediately above Callender, and is the principal access to the highlands from that town. Glenartney is a forest near Benvoirlich. The whole forms a sublime tract of Alpine scenery.

O HONE a rie'! O hone a rie'!†
The pride of Albyn's line is o'er,
And fallen Glenartney's stateliest tree;
We ne'er shall see lord Ronald more!

O, sprung from great Macgillianore,
The chief that never fear'd a foe,
How matchless was thy broad claymore,
How deadly thine unerring bow!

Well can the Saxon widows tell,[1]
How, on the Teith's resounding shore,
The boldest lowland warriors fell,
As down from Lenny's pass you bore.

But o'er his hills, on festal day,
How blazed lord Ronald's beltane tree;[2]
While youths and maids the light strathspey
So nimbly danced, with highland glee.

Cheered by the strength of Ronald's shell,
E'en age forgot his tresses hoar;
But now the loud lament we swell,
O, ne'er to see lord Ronald more!

From distant isles a chieftain came,
The joys of Ronald's hall to find,
And chase with him the dark brown game,
That bounds o'er Albyn's hills of wind.

'Twas Moy; whom, in Columba's isle,
The seer's prophetic spirit found,[3]
As, with a minstrel's fire the while,
He waked his harp's harmonious sound.

Full many a spell to him was known,
Which wandering spirits shrink to hear;
And many a lay of potent tone,
Was never meant for mortal ear.

For there, 'tis said, in mystic mood,
High converse with the dead they hold,
And oft espy the fated shroud,
That shall the future corpse enfold.

O so it fell, that on a day,
To rouse the red deer from their den,
The chiefs have ta'en their distant way,
And scoured the deep Glenfinlas' glen.

No vassals wait, their sports to aid,
To watch their safety, deck their board:
Their simple dress, the highland plaid;
Their trusty guard, the highland sword.

Three summer days, through brake and dell,
Their whistling shafts successful flew;
And still, when dewy evening fell,
The quarry to their hut they drew.

In gray Glenfinlas' deepest nook
The solitary cabin stood,
Fast by Moneira's sullen brook,
Which murmurs through that lonely wood.

Soft fell the night, the sky was calm,
When three successive days had flown;
And summer mist in dewy balm
Steeped heathy bank and mossy stone.

The moon, half hid in silvery flakes,
Afar her dubious radiance shed,
Quivering on Katrine's distant lakes,
And resting on Benledi's head.

Now in their hut, in social guise,
Their sylvan fare the chiefs enjoy;
And pleasure laughs in Roland's eyes,
As many a pledge he quaffs to Moy.

"What lack we here to crown our bliss,
While thus the pulse of joy beats high?
What, but fair woman's yielding kiss,
Her panting breath and melting eye?

"To chase the deer of yonder shades,
This morning left their father's pile
The fairest of our mountain maids,
The daughters of the proud Glengyle.

"Long have I sought sweet Mary's heart,
And dropped the tear, and heaved the sigh:
But vain the lover's wily art,
Beneath the sister's watchful eye.

"But thou may'st teach that guardian fair,
While far with Mary I am flown,
Of other hearts to cease her care,
And find it hard to guard her own.

"Touch but thy harp, thou soon shalt see
The lovely Flora of Glengyle,

---

* *Coronach* is the lamentation for a deceased warrior, sung by the aged of the clan.

† *O hone a rie* signifies—"Alas for the prince, or chief."

Unmindful of her charge and me,
Hang on thy notes, 'twixt tear and smile.

"Or, if she choose a melting tale,
All underneath the green-wood bough,
Will good St. Oran's rule prevail,[4]
Stern huntsman of the rigid brow?"

"Since Enrick's fight, since Morna's death,
No more on me shall rapture rise,
Responsive to the panting breath,
Or yielding kiss, or melting eyes.

"E'en then, when o'er the heath of wo,
Were sunk my hopes of love and fame,
I bade my harp's wild wailings flow,
On me the seer's sad spirit came.

"The last dread curse of angry heaven,
With ghastly sights and sounds of wo,
To dash each glimpse of joy, was given—
The gift, the future ill to know.

"The bark thou saw'st, yon summer morn,
So gayly part from Oban's bay,
My eye beheld her dashed and torn,
Far on the rocky Colonsay.

"The Fergus too, thy sister's son,
Thou saw'st, with pride, the gallant's power,
As marching 'gainst the lord of Downe,
He left the skirts of huge Benmore.

"Thou only saw'st their tartans* wave,
As down Benvoirlich's side they wound,
Heard'st but the pibroch,† answering brave
To many a target clanking round.

"I heard the groans, I marked the tears,
I saw the wound his bosom bore,
When on the serried Saxon spears
He poured his clan's resistless roar.

"And thou, who bidst me think of bliss,
And bidst my heart awake to glee,
And court, like thee, the wanton kiss,
That heart, O Ronald, bleeds for thee!

"I see the death-damps chill thy brow;
I hear thy warning spirit cry;
The corpse-lights dance—they're gone, and now—
No more is given to gifted eye!"

——"Alone enjoy thy dreary dreams,
Sad prophet of the evil hour!
Say, should we scorn joy's transient beams,
Because to-morrow's storm may lour?

"Or false, or sooth, thy words of wo,
Clangillian's chieftain ne'er shall fear;
His blood shall bound at rapture's glow,
Though doomed to stain the Saxon spear.

"E'en now, to meet me in yon dell,
My Mary's buskins brush the dew."
He spoke, nor bade the chief farewell,
But called his dogs and gay withdrew.

Within an hour returned each hound;
In rushed the rousers of the deer;
They howled in melancholy sound,
Then closely couched beside the seer.

No Ronald yet; though midnight came,
And sad were Moy's prophetic dreams,
As, bending o'er the dying flame,
He fed the watch-fire's quivering gleams.

Sudden the hounds erect their ears,
And sudden cease their moaning howl;
Closed press'd to Moy, they mark their fears
By shivering limbs, and stifled growl.

Untouched, the harp began to ring,
As softly, slowly, op'd the door,
And shook responsive every string,
As light a footstep pressed the floor.

And, by the watch-fire's glimmering light,
Close by the minstrel's side was seen
An huntress maid, in beauty bright,
All dropping wet her robes of green.

All dropping wet her garments seem,
Chilled was her cheek, her bosom bare,
As, bending o'er the dying gleam,
She wrung the moisture from her hair.

With maiden blush she softly said,
"O gentle huntsman, hast thou seen,
In deep Glenfinlas' moonlight glade,
A lovely maid in vest of green?

"With her a chief in highland pride;
His shoulders bear the hunter's bow,
The mountain dirk adorns his side,
Far on the wind his tartans flow?"

"And who art thou? and who are they?"
All ghastly gazing, Moy replied:
"And why, beneath the moon's pale ray,
Dare ye thus roam Glenfinlas' side?"

"Where wild Loch Katrine pours her tide,
Blue, dark, and deep, round many an isle,
Our father's towers o'erhang her side,
The castle of the bold Glengyle.

"To chase the dun Glenfinlas deer,
Our woodland course this morn we bore,
And haply met, while wandering here,
The son of great Macgillianore.

"O aid me, then, to seek the pair,
Whom, loitering in the woods, I lost;
Alone, I dare not venture there,
Where walks, they say, the shrieking ghost."

"Yes, many a shrieking ghost walks there;
Then, first, my own sad vow to keep,
Here will I pour my midnight prayer,
Which still must rise when mortals sleep."

"O first, for pity's gentle sake,
Guide a lone wanderer on her way!
For I must cross the haunted brake,
And reach my father's towers ere day."

"First, three times tell each ave-bead,
And thrice a pater-noster say;
Then kiss with me the holy reed:
So shall we safely wind our way."

"O shame to knighthood, strange and foul!
Go, doff the bonnet from thy brow,
And shroud thee in the monkish cowl,
Which best befits thy sullen vow.

"Not so, by high Dunlathmon's fire,
Thy heart was froze to love and joy,
When gayly rung thy raptured lyre,
To wanton Morna's melting eye."

Wild stared the minstrel's eye of flame,
And high his sable locks arose,
And quick his colour went and came,
As fear and rage alternate rose.

* *Tartans*, the full highland dress, made of the chequered stuff so termed.
† *Pibroch*, a piece of martial music, adapted to the highland bagpipe.

"And thou! when by the blazing oak
I lay, to her and love resign'd,
Say, rode ye on the eddying smoke,
Or sail'd ye on the midnight wind?

"Not thine a race of mortal blood,
Nor old Glengyle's pretended line;
Thy dame, the lady of the flood,
Thy sire, the monarch of the mine."

He mutter'd thrice St. Oran's rhyme,
And thrice St. Fillan's powerful prayer;[5]
Then turned him to the eastern clime,
And sternly shook his coal-black hair.

And, bending o'er his harp, he flung
His wildest witch-notes on the wind;
And loud, and high, and strange, they rung,
As many a magic change they find.

Tall waxed the spirit's altering form,
Till to the roof her stature grew;
Then, mingling with the rising storm,
With one wild yell, away she flew.

Rain beats, hail rattles, whirlwinds tear:
The slender hut in fragments flew;
But not a lock of Moy's loose hair
Was waved by wind, or wet by dew.

Wild mingling with the howling gale,
Loud bursts of ghastly laughter rise;
High o'er the minstrel's head they sail,
And die amid the northern skies.

The voice of thunder shook the wood,
As ceased the more than mortal yell;
And, spattering foul, a shower of blood
Upon the hissing firebrands fell.

Next, dropped from high a mangled arm;
The fingers strained a half-drawn blade;
And last, the life-blood streaming warm,
Torn from the trunk, a gasping head.

Oft o'er that head, in battling field,
Streamed the proud crest of high Benmore;
That arm the broad claymore could wield,
Which dyed the Teith with Saxon gore.

Wo to Moneira's sullen rills!
Wo to Glenfinlas' dreary glen!
There never son of Albyn's hills
Shall draw the hunter's shaft agen!

E'en the tired pilgrim's burning feet
At noon shall shun that sheltering den,
Lest, journeying in their rage, he meet
The wayward ladies of the glen.

And we—behind the chieftain's shield,
No more shall we in safety dwell;
None leads the people to the field—
And we the loud lament must swell.

O hone a rie'! O hone a rie'!
The pride of Albyn's line is o'er,
And fallen Glenartney's stateliest tree;
We ne'er shall see lord Ronald more!

NOTES.

1. Well can the Saxon widows tell.—P. 400.

The term Sassenach, or Saxon, is applied by the highlanders to their low-country neighbours.

2. How blazed lord Ronald's beltane tree.—P. 400.

The fires lighted by the highlanders on the first of May, in compliance with a custom derived from the pagan times, are termed, *the Beltane Tree*. It is a festival celebrated with various superstitious rites, both in the north of Scotland and in Wales.

3. The seer's prophetic spirit found, &c.—P. 400.

I can only describe the second sight, by adopting Dr. Johnson's definition, who calls it "an impression, either by the mind upon the eye, or by the eye upon the mind, by which things distant and future are perceived and seen as if they were present." To which I would only add, that the spectral appearances, thus presented, usually presage misfortune; that the faculty is painful to those who suppose they possess it; and that they usually acquire it, while themselves under the pressure of melancholy.

4. Will good St. Oran's rule prevail.—P. 401.

St. Oran was a friend and follower of St. Columba, and was buried in Icolmkill. His pretensions to be a saint were rather dubious. According to the legend, he consented to be buried alive, in order to propitiate certain demons of the soil, who obstructed the attempts of Columba to build a chapel. Columba caused the body of his friend to be dug up, after three days had elapsed; when Oran, to the horror and scandal of the assistants, declared, that there was neither a God, a judgment, nor a future state! He had no time to make further discoveries, for Columba caused the earth once more to be shovelled over him with the utmost despatch. The chapel, however, and the cemetery, was called *Reilig Ouran;* and, in memory of his rigid celibacy, no female was permitted to pay her devotions, or be buried, in that place. This is the rule alluded to in the poem.

5. And thrice St. Fillan's powerful prayer.—P. 402.

St. Fillan has given his name to many chapels, holy fountains, &c. in Scotland. He was, according to Camerarius, an abbot of Pittenweem, in Fife, from which situation he retired, and died a hermit in the wilds of Glenurchy, A. D. 649. While engaged in transcribing the Scriptures, his left hand was observed to send forth such a splendour, as to afford light to that with which he wrote; a miracle which saved many candles to the convent, as St. Fillan used to spend whole nights in that exercise. The 9th of January was dedicated to this saint, who gave his name to Kilfillan, in Renfrew, and St. Phillans, or Forgend, in Fife. Lesley, lib. 7, tells us, that Robert the Bruce was possessed of Fillan's miraculous and luminous arm, which he inclosed in a silver shrine, and had it carried at the head of his army. Previous to the battle of Bannockburn, the king's chaplain, a man of little faith, abstracted the relic, and deposited it in some place of security, lest it should fall into the hands of the English. But, lo! while Robert was addressing his prayers to the empty casket, it was observed to open and shut suddenly; and, on inspection, the saint was found to have himself deposited his arm in the shrine, as an assurance of victory. Such is the tale of Lesley. But though Bruce little needed that the arm of St. Fillan should assist his own, he dedicated to him, in gratitude, a priory at Killin, upon Loch Tay.

In the Scots Magazine for July, 1802 (a national periodical publication, which has lately revived with considerable energy,) there is a copy of a very curious crown-grant, dated 11th July, 1487, by which James III confirms to Malice Doire, an inhabitant of Strathfillan, in Perthshire, the peaceable exercise and enjoyment of a relic of St. Fillan, called the Quegrich, which he, and his pre-

decessors, are said to have possessed since the days of Robert Bruce. As the quegrich was used to eure diseases, this document is, probably, the most ancient patent ever granted for a quaek medicine. The ingenious correspondent, by whom it is furnished, further observes, that additional particulars concerning St. Fillan are to be found in *Ballenden's Boece*, book 4, folio eexiii, and in *Pennant's Tour in Scotland*, 1772, pp. 11, 15.

THE EVE OF ST. JOHN.

Smaylho'me, or Smallholm Tower, the scene of the following ballad, is situated on the northern boundary of Roxburghshire, among a cluster of wild rocks, called Sandiknow Crags, the property of Hugh Scott, Esq., of Harden. The tower is a high square building, surrounded by an outer wall, now ruinous. The eireuit of the outer court, being defended, on three sides, by a precipice and morass, is accessible only from the west, by a steep and rocky path. The apartments, as is usual in a border-keep, or fortress, are plaeed one above another, and communieate by a narrow stair; on the roof are two bartizans, or platforms, for defenee or pleasure. The inner door of the tower is wood, the outer an iron grate; the distanee between them being nine feet, the thiekness, namely, of the wall. From the elevated situation of Smaylho'me Tower, it is seen many miles in every direetion. Among the crags by which it is surrounded, one, more eminent, is called *The Watchfold*; and is said to have been the station of a beacon, in the times of war with England. Without the tower-court is a ruined chapel. Brotherstone is a heath, in the neighbourhood of Smaylho'me Tower.

This ancient fortress and its vicinity formed the scene of the author's infaney, and seemed to claim from him this attempt to eelebrate them in a border tale. The catastrophe of the tale is founded upon a well-known Irish tradition.

The baron of Smaylho'me rose with day,
He spurred his courser on,
Without stop or stay, down the rocky way,
That leads to Brotherstone.

He went not with the bold Buccleuch,
His banner broad to rear:
He went not 'gainst the English yew
To lift the Scottish spear.

Yet his plate-jack* was braced, and his helmet was laced,
And his vaunt-brace of proof he wore;
At his saddle-gerthe was a good steel sperthe,
Full ten pound weight and more.

The baron returned in three days' space,
And his looks were sad and sour;
And weary was his courser's pace,
As he reached his roeky tower.

He came not from where Aneram Moor[1]
Ran red with English blood;
Where the Douglas true, and the bold Buccleuch,
'Gainst keen lord Evers stood.

Yet was his helmet hacked and hewed,
His aeton piereed and tore;
His axe and his dagger with blood embrued,
But it was not English gore.

He lighted at the Chapellage,
He held him elose and still;
And he whistled thriee for his little foot-page,
His name was English Will.

"Come thou hither, my little foot-page;
Come hither to my knee;
Though thou art young, and tender of age,
I think thou art true to me.

"Come, tell me all that thou hast seen,
And look thou tell me true!
Since I from Smaylho'me tower have been,
What did thy lady do?"

"My lady, each night, sought the lonely light,
That burns on the wild Watchfold;
For, from height to height, the beacons bright
Of the English foemen told.

"The bittern clamoured from the moss,
The wind blew loud and shrill;
Yet the craggy pathway she did cross,
To the eiry beacon hill.

"I watched her steps, and silent came
Where she sat her on a stone;
No watchman stood by the dreary flame;
It burned all alone.

"The seeond night I kept her in sight,
Till to the fire she came,
And, by Mary's might! an armed knight
Stood by the lonely flame.

"And many a word that warlike lord
Did speak to my lady there;
But the rain fell fast, and loud blew the blast,
And I heard not what they were.

"The third night there the sky was fair,
And the mountain blast was still,
As again I watched the seeret pair,
On the lonesome beacon hill.

"And I heard her name the midnight hour,
And name this holy eve;
And say, 'Come this night to thy lady's bower:
Ask no bold baron's leave.

"'He lifts his spear with the bold Buccleuch;
His lady is all alone;
The door she'll undo to her knight so true,
On the eve of good St. John.'

"'I cannot come; I must not come,
I dare not come to thee;
On the eve of St. John I must wander alone;
In thy bower I may not be.'

"'Now, out on thee, faint-hearted knight!
Thou shouldst not say me nay;
For the eve is sweet, and when lovers meet,
Is worth the whole summer's day.

"'And I'll chain the blood-hound, and the warder shall not sound,
And rushes shall be strewed on the stair,
So, by the black rood-stone,* and by holy St. John,
I conjure thee, my love, to be there!'

"'Though the blood-hound be mute, and the rush beneath my foot,
And the warder his hugle should not blow,
Yet there sleepeth a priest in the chamber to the east,
And my footstep he would know.'

"'O fear not the priest, who sleepeth to the east!
For to Dryburgh† the way he has ta'en;

* The *plate-jack* is coat-armour; the *vaunt-brace*, or wambrace, armour for the body; the *sperthe*, a battle-axe.

* The black rood of Melrose was a crucifix of black marble, and of superior sanctity.

† Dryburgh abbey is beautifully situated on the banks of the Tweed. After its dissolution, it became the property

And there to say mass, till three days do pass,
For the soul of a knight that is slayne.'

"He turned him round, and grimly he frowned;
Then he laughed right scornfully;
'He who says the mass-rite for the soul of that knight,
May as well say mass for me.

"'At the lone midnight hour, when bad spirits have power,
In thy chamber will I be.'
With that he was gone, and my lady left alone,
And no more did I see."

Then changed, I trow, was that bold baron's brow,
From the dark to the blood-red high;
"Now, tell me the mien of the knight thou hast seen,
For, by Mary, he shall die!"

"His arms shone full bright in the beacon's red light,
His plume it was scarlet and blue;
On his shield was a hound, in a silver leash bound,
And his crest was a branch of the yew."

"Thou liest, thou liest, thou little foot-page,
Loud dost thou lie to me!
For that knight is cold, and low laid in the mould,
All under the Eildon tree."*

"Yet hear but my word, my noble lord!
For I heard her name his name;
And that lady bright, she called the knight,
Sir Richard of Coldinghame."

The bold baron's brow then changed, I trow,
From high blood-red to pale!
"The grave is deep and dark, and the corpse is stiff and stark,
So I may not trust thy tale.

"Where fair Tweed flows round holy Melrose,
And Eildon slopes to the plain,
Full three nights ago, by some secret foe,
That gay gallant was slain.

"The varying light deceived thy sight,
And the wild winds drowned the name;
For the Dryburgh bells ring, and the white monks do sing,
For sir Richard of Coldinghame!"

He passed the court gate, and he op'd the tower grate,
And he mounted the narrow stair,
To the bartizan seat, where, with maids that on her wait,
He found his lady fair.

That lady sat in mournful mood;
Looked over hill and dale;
Over Tweed's fair flood, and Mertoun's† wood,
And all down Teviotdale.

"Now hail, now hail, thou lady bright!"
"Now hail, thou baron true!
What news, what news, from Ancram fight?
What news from the bold Buccleuch?"

"The Ancram Moor is red with gore,
For many a southron fell;
And Buccleuch has charged us, evermore,
To watch our beacons well."

The lady blushed red, but nothing she said;
Nor added the baron a word:
Then she stepp'd down the stair to her chamber fair,
And so did her moody lord.

In sleep the lady mourned, and the baron tossed and turned,
And oft to himself he said,
"The worms around him creep, and his bloody grave is deep—
It cannot give up the dead!"

It was near the ringing of matin bell,
The night was well nigh done,
When a heavy sleep on that baron fell,
On the eve of good St. John.

The lady looked through the chamber fair,
By the light of a dying flame;
And she was aware of a knight stood there,
Sir Richard of Coldinghame!

"Alas! away, away!" she cried,
"For the holy Virgin's sake!"
"Lady, I know who sleeps by thy side;
But, lady, he will not awake.

"By Eildon tree, for long nights three,
In bloody grave have I lain;
The mass and the death prayer are said for me,
But, lady, they are said in vain.

"By the baron's brand, near Tweed's fair strand,
Most foully slain I fell;
And my restless sprite on the beacon's height,
For a space is doomed to dwell.

"At our trysting-place,* for a certain space,
I must wander to and fro;
But I had not had power to come to thy bower,
Hadst thou not conjured me so."

Love mastered fear; her brow she crossed;
"How, Richard, hast thou sped?
And art thou saved, or art thou lost?"
The Vision shook his head!

"Who spilleth life shall forfeit life;
So bid thy lord believe:
That lawless love is guilt above,
This awful sign receive."

He laid his left palm on an oaken beam;
His right upon her hand:
The lady shrunk, and, fainting, sunk,
For it scorched like a fiery brand.

The sable score of fingers four,
Remains on that board impressed;
And for evermore that lady wore
A covering on her wrist.

There is a nun in Dryburgh bower,[2]
Ne'er looks upon the sun:
There is a monk in Melrose tower,
He speaketh word to none.

That nun, who ne'er beholds the day,
That monk, who speaks to none,
That nun was Smaylho'me's lady gay,
That monk the bold baron.

---

of the Haliburtons of Newmains, and is now the seat of the right honourable the earl of Buchan. It belonged to the order of Premonstratenses.

* Eildon is a high hill, terminating in three conical summits, immediately above the town of Melrose, where are the admired ruins of a magnificent monastery. Eildon tree is said to be the spot where Thomas the Rhymer uttered his prophecies.

† Mertoun is the beautiful seat of Hugh Scott, esq. of Harden.

* *Trysting-place*, a place of rendezvous.

NOTES.

1. BATTLE OF ANCRAM MOOR.—P. 403.

Lord Evers, and sir Brian Latoun, during the year 1544, committed the most dreadful ravages upon the Scottish frontiers, compelling most of the inhabitants, and especially the men of Liddesdale, to take assurance under the king of England. Upon the 17th of November, in that year, the sum total of their depredations stood thus, in the bloody leger of lord Evers.

Towns, towers, barnekynes, paryshe churches, bastill houses, burned and destroyed.....	192
Scots slain.....	403
Prisoners taken.....	816
Nolt (cattle).....	10,386
Shepe.....	12,492
Nags and geldings.....	1,296
Gayt.....	200
Bolls of corn.....	850
Insight gear, &c. (furniture) an incalculable quantity.	

Murdin's State Papers, vol. i, p. 51.

The king of England had promised to these two barons a feudal grant of the country, which they had thus reduced to a desert; upon hearing which, Archibald Douglas, the seventh earl of Angus, is said to have sworn to write the deed of investiture upon their skins, with sharp pens and bloody ink, in resentment for their having defaced the tombs of his ancestors, at Melrose.—*Godscroft.* In 1545, lord Evers and Latoun again entered Scotland with an army, consisting of 3000 mercenaries, 1500 English borderers, and 700 assured Scottishmen, chiefly Armstrongs, Turnbulls, and other broken clans. In this second incursion, the English generals even exceeded their former cruelty. Evers burned the tower of Broomhouse, with its lady (a noble and aged woman, says Lesley,) and her whole family. The English penetrated as far as Melrose, which they had destroyed last year, and which they now again pillaged. As they returned towards Jedburg, they were followed by Angus, at the head of 1000 horse, who was shortly after joined by the famous Norman Lesley, with a body of Fife-men. The English, being probably unwilling to cross the Teviot while the Scots hung upon their rear, halted upon Ancram moor, above the village of that name; and the Scottish general was deliberating whether to advance or retire, when sir Walter Scott* of Buccleuch came up, at full speed, with a small but chosen body of his retainers, the rest of whom were near at hand. By the advice of this experienced warrior (to whose conduct Pitscottie and Buchanan ascribe the success of the engagement,) Angus withdrew from the height which he occupied, and drew up his forces behind it, upon a piece of low flat ground, called Panier-heugh, or Peniel-heugh. The spare horses, being sent to an eminence in their rear, appeared to the English to be the main body of the Scots, in the act of flight. Under this persuasion, Evers and Latoun hurried precipitately forward, and, having ascended the hill, which their foes had abandoned, were no less dismayed than astonished, to find the phalanx of Scottish spearmen drawn up, in firm array, upon the flat ground below. The Scots in their turn became the assailants. A heron, roused from the marshes by the tumult, soared away betwixt the encountering armies: "O!" exclaimed Angus, "that I had here my white goss hawk, that we might all yoke at once!"—*Godscroft.* The English, breathless and fatigued, having the setting sun and wind full in their faces, were unable to withstand the resolute and desperate charge of the Scottish lances. No sooner had they begun to waver, than their own allies, the assured borderers, who had been waiting the event, threw aside their red crosses, and, joining their countrymen, made a most merciless slaughter among the English fugitives, the pursuers calling upon each other to "remember Broomhouse!"—*Lesley*, p. 478. In the battle fell lord Evers, and his son, together with sir Brian Latoun, and 800 Englishmen, many of whom were persons of rank. A thousand prisoners were taken. Among these was a patriotic alderman of London, Read by name, who, having contumaciously refused to pay his portion of a benevolence, demanded from the city by Henry VIII, was sent by royal authority to serve against the Scots. These, at settling his ransom, he found still more exorbitant in their exactions than the monarch.—*Redpath's Border History*, p. 553. Evers was much regretted by king Henry, who swore to avenge his death upon Angus; against whom he conceived himself to have particular grounds of resentment, on account of favours received by the earl at his hands. The answer of Angus was worthy of a Douglas. "Is our brother-in-law offended,"* said he, "that I, as a good Scotsman, have avenged my ravaged country, and the defaced tombs of my ancestors, upon Ralph Evers? They were better men than he, and I was bound to do no less—and will he take my life for that? Little knows king Henry the skirts of Kirnetable:† I can keep myself there against all his English host."—*Godscroft.*

Such was the noted battle of Ancram Moor. The spot on which it was fought is called Lyliard's Edge, from an Amazonian Scottish woman of that name, who is reported, by tradition, to have distinguished herself in the same manner as squire Witherington. The old people point out her monument, now broken and defaced. The inscription is said to have been legible within this century, and to have run thus:

Fair maiden Lylliard lies under this stane,
Little was her stature, but great was her fame;
Upon the English louns she laid mony thumps,
And when her legs were cutted off, she fought upon her stumps.

Vide *Account of the Parish of Melrose.*

It appears, from a passage in Stowe, that an ancestor of lord Evers held also a grant of Scottish lands from an English monarch. "I have seen," says the historian, "under the broad seale of the said king Edward I, a manor called Ketnes, in the countie of Ferfare, in Scotland, and neere the furthest part of the same nation northward, given

* The editor has found no instance upon record of this family having taken assurance with England. Hence they usually suffered dreadfully from the English forays. In August, 1544 (the year preceding the battle,) the whole lands belonging to Buccleuch, in West Teviotdale, were harried by Evers; the out-works, or barnkin, of the tower of Branxholm, burned; eight Scots slain, thirty made prisoners, and an immense prey of horses, cattle, and sheep, carried off. The lands upon Kale Water, belonging to the same chieftain, were also plundered, and much spoil obtained; thirty Scots slain, and the Moss Tower (a fortress near Eckford) *smoked very sore.* Thus Buccleuch had a long account to settle at Ancram Moor.—*Murdin's State Papers*, pp. 45, 46.

* Angus had married the widow of James IV, sister to king Henry VIII.

† Kirnetable, now called Cairntable, is a mountainous tract at the head of Douglasdale.

to John Eure and his heirs, ancestor to the lord Eure that now is, and for his service done in these partes, with market, &c. dated at Lanercost, the 20th day of October, anno regis, 34."—*Stowe's Annals*, p. 210. This grant, like that of Henry, must have been dangerous to the receiver.

2. There is a nun in Dryburgh bower.—P. 404.

The circumstance of the nun, "who never saw the day," is not entirely imaginary. About fifty years ago, an unfortunate female wanderer took up her residence in a dark vault, among the ruins of Dryburgh-abbey, which, during the day, she never quitted. When night fell, she issued from this miserable habitation, and went to the house of Mr. Haliburton, of Newmains, the editor's great-grandfather, or to that of Mr. Erskine, of Shielfield, two gentlemen of the neighbourhood. From their charity she obtained such necessaries as she could be prevailed upon to accept. At twelve, each night, she lighted her candle, and returned to her vault; assuring her friendly neighbours that, during her absence, her habitation was arranged by a spirit, to whom she gave the uncouth name of *Futlips;* describing him as a little man, wearing heavy iron shoes, with which he trampled the clay floor of the vault, to dispel the damps. This circumstance caused her to be regarded, by the well-informed, with compassion, as deranged in her understanding; and by the vulgar, with some degree of terror. The cause of her adopting this extraordinary mode of life she would never explain. It was, however, believed to have been occasioned by a vow, that, during the absence of a man, to whom she was attached, she would never look upon the sun. Her lover never returned. He fell during the civil war of 1745–6, and she never more would behold the light of day.

The vault, or rather dungeon, in which this unfortunate woman lived and died, passes still by the name of the supernatural being, with which its gloom was tenanted by her disturbed imagination, and few of the neighbouring peasants dare enter it by night.

CADYOW CASTLE.

ADDRESSED TO THE

RIGHT HON. LADY ANNE HAMILTON.

The ruins of Cadyow, or Cadzow castle, the ancient baronial residence of the family of Hamilton, are situated upon the precipitous banks of the river Evan, about two miles above its junction with the Clyde. It was dismantled in the conclusion of the civil wars, during the reign of the unfortunate Mary, to whose cause the house of Hamilton devoted themselves with a generous zeal, which occasioned their temporary obscurity, and, very nearly, their total ruin. The situation of the ruins, embosomed in wood, darkened by ivy and creeping shrubs, and overhanging the brawling torrent, is romantic in the highest degree. In the immediate vicinity of Cadyow is a grove of immense oaks, the remains of the Caledonian forest, which anciently extended through the south of Scotland, from the Eastern to the Atlantic Ocean. Some of these trees measure twenty-five feet, and upwards, in circumference, and the state of decay, in which they now appear, shows, that they may have witnessed the rites of the druids. The whole scenery is included in the magnificent and extensive park of the duke of Hamilton. There was long preserved in this forest the breed of the Scottish wild cattle, until their ferocity occasioned their being extirpated, about forty years ago. Their appearance was beautiful, being milk white, with black muzzles, horns, and hoofs. The bulls are described by ancient authors, as having white manes; but those of latter days had lost that peculiarity, perhaps by intermixture with the tame breed.*

In detailing the death of the regent Murray, which is made the subject of the following ballad, it would be injustice to my reader to use other words than those of Dr. Robertson, whose account of that memorable event forms a beautiful piece of historical painting.

"Hamilton of Bothwellhaugh was the person who committed this barbarous action. He had been condemned to death soon after the battle of Langside, as we have already related, and owed his life to the regent's clemency. But part of his estate had been bestowed upon one of the regent's favourites,† who siezed his house, and turned out his wife, naked, in a cold night, into the open fields, where, before next morning, she became furiously mad. This injury made a deeper impression on him than the benefit he had received, and from that moment he vowed to be revenged of the regent. Party rage strengthened and inflamed his private resentment. His kinsmen, the Hamiltons, applauded the enterprise. The maxims of that age justified the most desperate course he could take to obtain vengeance. He followed the regent for some time, and watched for an opportunity to strike the blow. He resolved, at last, to wait till his enemy should arrive at Linlithgow, through which he was to pass, in his way from Stirling to Edinburgh. He took his stand in a wooden gallery,‡ which had a window towards the street; spread a feather-bed on the floor, to hinder the noise of his feet from being heard; hung up a black cloth behind him, that his shadow might not be observed from without; and, after all this preparation, calmly expected the regent's approach, who had lodged, during the night, in a house not far distant. Some indistinct information of the danger which threatened him had been conveyed to the regent, and he paid so much regard to it, that he resolved to return by the same gate through which he had entered, and to fetch a compass round the town. But, as the crowd about the gate was great, and he himself unacquainted with fear, he proceeded directly along the street; and the throng of people obliging him to move very slowly, gave the assassin time to take so true an aim, that he shot him, with a single bullet, through the lower part of his belly, and killed the horse of a gentleman, who rode on his other side. His followers instantly endeavoured to break into the house whence the blow had come; but they found the door strongly barricaded, and, before it could be forced open, Hamilton had mounted a fleet horse,§ which stood ready for him at a back-passage, and

* They were formerly kept in the park at Drumlanrig, and are still to be seen at Chillingham castle in Northumberland. For their nature and ferocity, see Notes.

† This was sir James Ballenden, lord-justice-clerk, whose shameful and inhuman rapacity occasioned the catastrophe in the text.—*Spottiswoode.*

‡ This projecting gallery is still shown. The house to which it was attached was the property of the archbishop of St. Andrews, a natural brother of the duke of Chatelherault, and uncle to Bothwellhaugh. This, among many other circumstances, seems to evince the aid which Bothwellhaugh received from his clan in effecting his purpose.

§ The gift of lord John Hamilton, commendator of Arbroath.

was got far beyond their reach. The regent died the same night of his wound."—*History of Scotland*, book v.

Bothwellhaugh rode straight to Hamilton, where he was received in triumph; for the ashes of the houses in Clydesdale, which had been burned by Murray's army, were yet smoking; and party prejudice, the habits of the age, and the enormity of the provocation, seemed to his kinsmen to justify his deed. After a short abode at Hamilton, this fierce and determined man left Scotland, and served in France, under the patronage of the family of Guise, to whom he was doubtless recommended by having avenged the cause of their niece, queen Mary, upon her ungrateful brother. De Thou has recorded, that an attempt was made to engage him to assassinate Gaspar de Coligni, the famous admiral of France, and the buckler of the Huguenot cause. But the character of Bothwellhaugh was mistaken. He was no mercenary trader in blood, and rejected the offer with contempt and indignation. He had no authority, he said, from Scotland, to commit murders in France; he had avenged his own just quarrel, but he would neither, for price nor prayer, avenge that of another man.—*Thuanus*, cap. 46.

The regent's death happened 23d January, 1569. It is applauded, or stigmatized, by contemporary historians, according to their religious or party prejudices. The triumph of Blackwood is unbounded. He not only extols the pious feat of Bothwellhaugh, "who," he observes, "satisfied, with a single ounce of lead, him, whose sacrilegious avarice had stripped the metropolitan church of St. Andrews of its covering;" but he ascribes it to immediate Divine inspiration, and the escape of Hamilton to little less than the miraculous interference of the Deity.—*Jebb*, vol. ii, p. 263. With equal injustice it was, by others, made the ground of a general national reflection; for, when Mather urged Berney to assassinate Burleigh, and quoted the examples of Poltrot and Bothwellhaugh, the other conspirators answered, "that neither Poltrot nor Hambleton did attempt their enterpryse, without some reason or consideration to lead them to it: as the one, by hyre, and promise of preferment or rewarde; the other, upon desperate mind of revenge, for a lytle wrong done unto him, as the report goethe, accordinge to the vyle trayterous disposysyon of the hoole natyon of the Scottes."—*Murdin's State Papers*, vol. i, p. 197.

When princely Hamilton's abode
Ennobled Cadyow's Gothic towers,
The song went round, the goblet flow'd,
And revel sped the laughing hours.

Then, thrilling to the harp's gay sound,
So sweetly rung each vaulted wall,
And echoed light the dancer's bound,
As mirth and music cheered the hall.

But Cadyow's towers, in ruins laid,
And vaults, by ivy mantled o'er,
Thrill to the music of the shade,
Or echo Evan's hoarser roar.

Yet still, of Cadyow's faded fame,
You bid me tell a minstrel tale,
And tune my harp, of border frame,
On the wild banks of Evandale.

For thou, from scenes of courtly pride,
From pleasure's lighter scenes, canst turn,
To draw oblivion's pall aside,
And mark the long forgotten urn.

Then, noble maid! at thy command,
Again the crumbled halls shall rise;
Lo! as on Evan's banks we stand,
The past returns, the present flies.

Where with the rock's wood-covered side
Were blended late the ruins green,
Rise turrets in fantastic pride,
And feudal banners flaunt between.

Where the rude torrent's brawling course
Was shagged with thorn and tangling sloe,
The ashler buttress braves its force,
And ramparts frown in battled row.

'Tis night: the shade of keep and spire
Obscurely dance on Evan's stream,
And on the wave the warder's fire
Is chequering the moonlight beam.

Fades slow their light; the east is gray;
The weary warder leaves his tower;
Steeds snort; uncoupled stag-hounds bay,
And merry hunters quit the bower.

The drawbridge falls, they hurry out;
Clatters each plank and swinging chain,
As, dashing o'er, the jovial rout
Urge the shy steed, and slack the rein.

First of his troop, the chief rode on;[1]
His shouting merrymen throng behind;
The steed of princely Hamilton
Was fleeter than the mountain wind.

From the thick copse the roebucks bound,
The startling red deer scuds the plain;
For the hoarse bugle's warrior sound
Has roused their mountain haunts again.

Through the huge oaks of Evandale,
Whose limbs a thousand years have worn,
What sullen roar comes down the gale,
And drowns the hunter's pealing horn?

Mightiest of all the beasts of chase,
That roam in woody Caledon,
Crashing the forest in his race,
The mountain bull comes thundering on.[2]

Fierce, on the hunters' quivered band,
He rolls his eye of swarthy glow,
Spurns, with black hoof and horn, the sand,
And tosses high his mane of snow.

Aimed well, the chieftain's lance has flown;
Struggling in blood the savage lies;
His roar is sunk in hollow groan!
Sound, merry huntsmen! sound the *pryse!**

'Tis noon: against the knotted oak
The hunters rest the idle spear;
Curls through the trees the slender smoke,
Where yeomen dight the woodland cheer.

Proudly the chieftain marked his clan,
On greenwood lap all careless thrown,
Yet missed his eye the boldest man,
That bore the name of Hamilton.

"Why fills not Bothwellhaugh his place,
Still wont our weal and wo to share?
Why comes he not our sport to grace?
Why shares he not our hunter's fare?"

Stern Claud replied, with darkening face,
(Gray Pasley's haughty lord was he,)[3]

* *Pryse*—The note blown at the death of the game.

"At merry feast, or buxom chase,
No more the warrior shalt thou see.

"Few suns have set, since Woodhouselee[4]
Saw Bothwellhaugh's bright goblets foam,
When to his hearths, in social glee,
The war-worn soldier turned him home.

"There, wan from her maternal throes,
His Margaret, beautiful and mild,
Sate in her bower, a pallid rose,
And peaceful nursed her new-born child.

"O change accurst! past are those days;
False Murray's ruthless spoilers came,
And, for the hearth's domestic blaze,
Ascends destruction's volumed flame.

"What sheeted phantom wanders wild,
Where mountain Eske thro' woodland flows,
Her arms enfold a shadowy child!
Oh is it she, the pallid rose?

"The wildered traveller sees her glide,
And hears her feeble voice with awe;
'Revenge,' she cries, 'on Murray's pride!
And wo for injured Bothwellhaugh!' "

He ceased; and cries of rage and grief
Burst mingling from the kindred band,
And half arose the kindling chief,
And half unsheathed his Arran brand.

But who, o'er bush, o'er stream, and rock,
Rides headlong, with resistless speed,
Whose bloody poniard's frantic stroke
Drives to the leap his jaded steed?[5]

Whose cheek is pale, whose eye-balls glare,
As one some visioned sight that saw,
Whose hands are bloody, loose his hair?
—'Tis he! 'tis he! 'tis Bothwellhaugh!

From gory selle,* and reeling steed,
Sprung the fierce horseman with a bound,
And, reeking from the recent deed,
He dashed his carbine on the ground.

Sternly he spoke: "'Tis sweet to hear,
In good green-wood, the bugle blown;
But sweeter to revenge's ear,
To drink a tyrant's dying groan.

"Your slaughtered quarry proudly trod,
At dawning morn, o'er dale and down,
But prouder base-born Murray rode
Through old Linlithgow's crowded town.

"From the wild border's humbled side,
In haughty triumph marched he,[6]
While Knox relaxed his bigot pride,
And smiled, the traitorous pomp to see.

"But can stern Power, with all his vaunt,
Or Pomp, with all her courtly glare,
The settled heart of Vengeance daunt,
Or change the purpose of Despair?

"With hackbut bent,† my secret stand,[7]
Dark as the purposed deed, I chose,
And marked, where, mingling in his band,
Trooped Scottish pikes and English bows.

"Dark Morton, girt with many a spear,[8]
Murder's foul minion, led the van;
And clashed their broadswords in the rear,
The wild Macfarlane's plaided clan.[9]

"Glencairn and stout Parkhead were nigh,
Obsequious at their regent's rein,[10]
And haggard Lindsay's iron eye,
That saw fair Mary weep in vain.[11]

"Mid pennoned spears, a steely grove,
Proud Murray's plumage floated high;
Scarce could his trampling charger move,
So close the minions crowded nigh.[12]

"From the raised vizor's shade, his eye,
Dark rolling, glanced the ranks along,
And his steel truncheon, waved on high,
Seemed marshalling the iron throng.

"But yet his saddened brow confessed
A passing shade of doubt and awe;
Some fiend was whispering in his breast,
'Beware of injured Bothwellhaugh!'

"The death-shot parts, the charger springs,
Wild rises tumult's startling roar!
And Murray's plumy helmet rings,—
Rings on the ground, to rise no more.

"What joy the raptured youth can feel,
To hear her love the loved one tell,
Or, he who broaches on his steel
The wolf, by whom his infant fell!

"But dearer to my injured eye,
To see in dust proud Murray roll;
And mine was ten times trebled joy,
To hear him groan his felon soul.

"My Margaret's spectre glided near;
With pride her bleeding victim saw;
And shrieked in his death-deafened ear,
'Remember injured Bothwellhaugh!'

"Then speed thee, noble Chatelrault!
Spread to the wind thy bannered tree!
Each warrior bend his Clydesdale bow!
Murray is fallen, and Scotland free!"

Vaults every warrior to his steed;
Loud bugles join their wild acclaim,—
"Murray is fallen and Scotland freed!
Couch, Arran! couch thy spear of flame!"

But, see! the minstrel vision fails,
The glimmering spears are seen no more;
The shouts of war die on the gales,
Or sink in Evan's lonely roar.

For the loud bugle, pealing high,
The blackbird whistles down the vale,
And sunk in ivied ruins lie
The bannered towers of Evandale.

For chiefs intent on bloody deed,
And Vengeance shouting o'er the slain,
Lo! high-born Beauty rules the steed,
Or graceful guides the silken rein.

And long may Peace and Pleasure own
The maids, who list the minstrel's tale;
Nor e'er a ruder guest be known
On the fair banks of Evandale!

* *Selle*—Saddle. A word used by Spencer, and other ancient authors.

† *Hackbut bent*—Gun cocked.

NOTES.

1. First of his troop, the chief rode on.—P. 407.

The head of the family of Hamilton, at this period, was James, earl of Arran, duke of Chatelherault in France, and first peer of the Scottish realm. In 1569, he was appointed by queen Mary, her lieutenant-general in Scotland, under the singular title of her adopted father.

2. The mountain bull comes thundering on.—P. 407.

"In Caledonia olim frequens erat sylvestris qui-

dam bos, nunc vero rarior, qui colore candidissimo, jubam densam et demissam instar leonis gestat, truculentus ac ferus, ab humano genere abhorrens, ut quæcunque homines vel manibus contrectaverint, vel halitu perflaverint, ab iis multos post dies omnino abstinuerint. Ad hoc tanta audacia huic bovi indita erat, ut non solum irritatus equites furenter prosterneret, sed ne tantillum lacessitus omnes promiscue homines cornibus, ac unguis peteret; ac canum, qui apud nos ferocissimi sunt, impetus plane contemneret. Ejus carnes cartilaginosæ sed saporis suavissimi. Erat is olim per illam vastissimam Caledoniæ sylvam frequens, sed humana ingluvie jam assumptus tribus tantum locis est reliquus, Strivilingii, Cumbernaldiæ, et Kincarniæ."—*Leslæus, Scotiæ Descriptio*, p. 13.

3. Stern Claud replied, with darkening face
(Gray Pasley's haughty lord was he.)—P. 407.

Lord Claud Hamilton, second son of the duke of Chatelherault, and commendator of the abbey of Paisley, acted a distinguished part during the troubles of queen Mary's reign, and remained unalterably attached to the cause of that unfortunate princess. He led the van of her army at the fatal battle of Langside, and was one of the commanders at the Raid of Stirling, which had so nearly given complete success to the queen's faction. He was ancestor to the present marquis of Abercorn.

4. Few suns have set, since Woodhouselee.—P. 408.

This barony, stretching along the banks of the Esk, near Auchendinny, belonged to Bothwellhaugh, in right of his wife. The ruins of the mansion, from whence she was expelled in the brutal manner which occasioned her death, are still to be seen in a hollow glen beside the river. Popular report tenants them with the restless ghost of the lady Bothwellhaugh; whom, however, it confounds with lady Anne Bothwell, whose *Lament* is so popular. This spectre is so tenacious of her rights, that, a part of the stones of the ancient edifice having been employed in building or repairing the present Woodhouselee, she has deemed it a part of her privilege to haunt that house also; and, even of very late years, has excited considerable disturbance and terror among the domestics. This is a more remarkable vindication of the *rights of ghosts*, as the present Woodhouselee, which gives his title to the honourable Alexander Fraser Tytler, a senator of the college of justice, is situated on the slope of the Pentland hills, distant at least four miles from her proper abode. She always appears in white, and with a child in her arms.

5. Whose bloody poniard's frantic stroke,
Drives to the leap his jaded steed.—P. 408.

Birrell informs us, that Bothwellhaugh, being closely pursued, "after that spur and wand had failed him, he drew forth his dagger, and stroke his horse behind, whilk caused the horse to leap a verey brode stank, (*i. e.* ditch,) by whilk means he escapit, and gat away from all the rest of the horses."—*Birrel's Diary*, p. 18.

6. From the wild border's humbled side,
In haughty triumph marched he.—P. 408.

Murray's death took place shortly after an expedition to the borders; which is thus commemorated by the author of his elegy.

"So having stablischt all thing in this sort,
To Liddisdaill again he did resort,
Throw Ewisdail, Eskdail, and all the daills rode he,
And also lay three nights in Cannabie.
Whair na prince lay thir hundred yeiris before,
Nae thief durst stir, they did him feir so sair;
And, that they suld na mair thair thift alledge,
Threescore and twelf he brocht of thame in pledge,
Syne wardit thame, whilk made the rest keep ordour,
Than mycht the rasch-bus keep ky on the bordour.
Scottish Poems, 16th century, p. 232.

7. With hackbut bent, my secret stand.—P. 408.

The carabine, with which the regent was shot, is preserved at Hamilton palace. It is a brass piece, of a middling length, very small in the bore, and, what is rather extraordinary, appears to have been rifled or indented in the barrel. It had a matchlock, for which a modern firelock has been injudiciously substituted.

8. Dark Morton, girt with many a spear.—P. 408.

Of this noted person it is enough to say, that he was active in the murder of David Rizzio, and at least privy to that of Darnley.

9. The wild Macfarlane's plaided clan.—P. 408.

This clan of Lennox highlanders were attached to the regent Murray. Holinshead, speaking of the battle of Langside, says, "In this batayle the valiance of an hieland gentleman, named Macfarlane, stood the regent's part in great steede; for, in the hottest brunte of the fighte, he came up with two hundred of his friendes and countrymen, and so manfully gave in upon the flankes of the queene's people, that he was a great cause of the disordering of them. This Macfarlane had been lately before, as I have heard, condemned to die, for some outrage by him committed, and obtayning pardon through suyt of the countess of Murray, he recompensed that clemencie by this piece of service now at this batayle." Calderwood's account is less favourable to the Macfarlanes. He states, that "Macfarlane, with his highlandmen, fled from the wing where they were set. The lord Lindesay, who stood nearest to them in the regent's battle, said, 'let them go! I shall fill their places better:' and so stepping forward with a company of fresh men, charged the enemy, whose spears were now spent, with long weapons, so that they were driven back by force, being before almost overthrown by the avant guard and harquebusiers, and so were turned to flight." *Calderwood's MS. apud Keith*, page 480. Melville mentions the flight of the vanguard, but states it to have been commanded by Morton, and composed chiefly of commoners of the barony of Renfrew.

10. Glencairn and stout Parkhead were nigh,
Obsequious at their regent's rein.—P. 408.

The earl of Glencairn was a steady adherent of the regent. George Douglas, of Parkhead, was a natural brother of the earl of Morton: his horse was killed by the same ball by which Murray fell.

11. And haggard Lindsay's iron eye,
That saw fair Mary weep in vain.—P. 408.

Lord Lindesay, of the Byres, was the most ferocious and brutal of the regent's faction; and, as such, was employed to extort Mary's signature to the deed of resignation, presented to her in Lochleven castle. He discharged his commission with the most savage rigour; and it is even said, that when the weeping captive, in the act of signing, averted her eyes from the fatal deed, he pinched her arm with the grasp of his iron glove.

12. Scarce could his trampling charger move,
So close the minions crowded nigh.—P. 408.

Richard Bannatyne mentions in his journal, that John Knox repeatedly warned Murray to avoid Linlithgow.

Not only had the regent notice of the intended attempt upon his life, but even of the very house from which it was threatened.

With that infatuation, at which men wonder after such events have happened, he deemed it would be a sufficient precaution to ride briskly past the dangerous spot. But even this was prevented by the crowd: so that Bothwellhaugh had time to take a deliberate aim.—*Spottiswoode*, p. 233. *Buchanan.*

THE GRAY BROTHER.

A FRAGMENT.

The imperfect state of this ballad, which was written several years ago, is not a circumstance affected for the purpose of giving it that peculiar interest, which is often found to arise from ungratified curiosity. On the contrary, it was the author's intention to have completed the tale, if he had found himself able to succeed to his own satisfaction. Yielding to the opinion of persons, whose judgment, if not biassed by the partiality of friendship, is entitled to deference, the author has preferred inserting these verses, as a fragment, to his intention of entirely suppressing them.

The tradition, upon which the tale is founded, regards a house, upon the barony of Gilmerton, near Lasswade, in Mid-Lothian. This building, now called Gilmerton-Grange, was originally named Burndale, from the following tragic adventure. The barony of Gilmerton belonged, of yore, to a gentleman, named Heron, who had one beautiful daughter. This young lady was seduced by the abbot of Newbottle, a richly endowed abbey, upon the banks of the South Esk, now a seat of the marquis of Lothian. Heron came to the knowledge of this circumstance, and learned, also, that the lovers carried on their guilty intercourse by the connivance of the lady's nurse, who lived at this house, of Gilmerton-Grange, or Burndale. He formed a resolution of bloody vengeance, undeterred by the supposed sanctity of the clerical character, or by the stronger claims of natural affection. Choosing, therefore, a dark and windy night, when the objects of his vengeance were engaged in a stolen interview, he set fire to a stack of dried thorns, and other combustibles, which he had caused to be piled against the house, and reduced to a pile of glowing ashes the dwelling, with all its inmates.*

The scene, with which the ballad opens, was suggested by the following curious passage, extracted from the life of Alexander Peden, one of the wandering and persecuted teachers of the sect of Cameronians, during the reign of Charles II, and his successor, James. This person was supposed by his followers, and, perhaps, really believed himself, to be possessed of supernatural gifts; for the wild scenes, which they frequented, and the constant dangers, which were incurred through their proscription, deepened upon their minds the gloom of superstition, so general in that age.

"About the same time he (Peden) came to Andrew Normand's house, in the parish of Alloway, in the shire of Ayr, being to preach at night in his barn. After he came in, he halted a little, leaning upon a chair-back, with his face covered; when he lifted up his head, he said, 'There are in this house that I have not one word of salvation unto;' he halted a little again, saying, 'This is strange, that the devil will not go out, that we may begin our work!' Then there was a woman went out, ill looked upon almost all her life, and to her dying hour, for a witch, with many presumptions of the same. It escaped me, in the former passages, that John Muirhead (whom I have often mentioned) told me, that when he came from Ireland to Galloway, he was at family worship, and giving some notes upon the Scripture, when a very ill looking man came, and sat down within the door, at the back of the *hallan:* (partition of the cottage:) immediately he halted, and said, 'There is some unhappy body just now come into this house. I charge him to go out, and not stop my mouth.' The person went out, and he *insisted*, (went on,) yet he saw him neither come in nor go out."—*The Life and Prophecies of Mr. Alexander Peden, late Minister of the Gospel at New Glenluce, in Galloway*, part ii, section 26.

The pope he was saying the high, high mass,
All on saint Peter's day,
With the power to him given, by the saints in heaven,
To wash men's sins away.

The pope he was saying the blessed mass,
And the people kneeled around;
And from each man's soul his sins did pass,
As he kissed the holy ground.

And all, among the crowded throng,
Was still, both limb and tongue,
While through vaulted roof, and aisles aloof,
The holy accents rung.

At the holiest word he quivered for fear,
And faltered in the sound;
And, when he would the chalice rear,
He dropped it on the ground.

"The breath of one, of evil deed,
Pollutes our sacred day;
He has no portion in our creed,
No part in what I say.

"A being, whom no blessed word
To ghostly peace can bring;
A wretch, at whose approach abhorred,
Recoils each holy thing.

"Up, up, unhappy! haste, arise!
My adjuration fear!
I charge thee not to stop my voice,
Nor longer tarry here!"

Amid them all a pilgrim kneeled,
In gown of sackcloth gray;
Far journeying from his native field,
He first saw Rome that day.

For forty days and nights so drear,
I ween, he had not spoke,
And, save with bread and water clear,
His fast he ne'er had broke.

Amid the penitential flock,
Seemed none more bent to pray;
But, when the holy father spoke,
He rose, and went his way.

Again unto his native land,
His weary course he drew,

* This tradition was communicated to me by John Clerk, esq. of Eldin, author of an *Essay upon Naval Tactics;* who will be remembered by posterity, as having taught the genius of Britain to concentrate her thunders, and to launch them against her foes with an unerring aim.

To Lothian's fair and fertile strand,
And Pentland's mountains blue.

His unblest feet his native seat,
Mid Eske's fair woods, regain;
Through woods more fair no stream more sweet
Rolls to the eastern main.

And lords to meet the pilgrim came,
And vassals bent the knee;
For all 'mid Scotland's chiefs of fame,
Was none more famed than he.

And boldly for his country still,
In battle he had stood,
Ay, even when, on the banks of Till,
Her noblest poured their blood.

Sweet are the paths, O, passing sweet!
By Eske's fair streams that run,
O'er airy steep, through copse-wood deep,
Impervious to the sun.

There the rapt poet's step may rove,
And yield the muse the day;
There Beauty, led by timid Love,
May shun the tell-tale ray:

From that fair dome, where suit is paid
By blast of bugle free,[1]
To Auchendinny's hazel glade,[2]
And haunted Woodhouselee.[3]

Who knows not Melville's beechy grove,[4]
And Roslin's rocky glen,[5]
Dalkeith, which all the virtues love,[6]
And classic Hawthornden?[7]

Yet never a path, from day to day,
The pilgrim's footsteps range,
Save but the solitary way
To Burndale's ruined Grange.

A woful place was that, I ween,
As sorrow could desire;
For, nodding to the fall was each crumbling wall,
And the roof was scathed with fire.

It fell upon a summer's eve,
While, on Carnethy's head,
The last faint gleams of the sun's low beams
Had streaked the gray with red;

And the convent bell did vespers tell,
Newbottle's oaks among,
And mingled with the solemn knell
Our ladye's evening song;

The heavy knell, the choir's faint swell,
Came slowly down the wind,
And on the pilgrim's ear they fell,
As his wonted path he did find.

Deep sunk in thought, I ween, he was,
Nor ever raised his eye,
Until he came to that dreary place,
Which did all in ruins lie.

He gazed on the wall, so scathed with fire,
With many a bitter groan;
And there was aware of a gray friar,
Resting him on a stone.

"Now, Christ thee save!" said the Gray Brother;
"Some pilgrim thou seemest to be."
But in sore amaze did lord Albert gaze,
Nor answer again made he.

"O come ye from east, or come ye from west,
Or bring relics from over the sea,
Or come ye from the shrine of St. James the divine,
Or saint John of Beverley?"

"I come not from the shrine of saint James the divine,
Nor bring relics from over the sea;
I bring but a curse from our father, the pope,
Which for ever will cling to me."

"Now, woful pilgrim, say not so!
But kneel thee down by me,
And shrive thee so clean of thy deadly sin,
That absolved thou may'st be."

"And who art thou, thou gray brother,
That I should shrive to thee,
When he, to whom are given the keys of earth and heaven,
Has no power to pardon me?"

"O I am sent from a distant clime,
Five thousand miles away,
And all to absolve a foul, foul crime,
Done *here* 'twixt night and day."

The pilgrim kneeled him on the sand,
And thus began his save—
When on his neck an ice-cold hand
Did that Gray Brother lave.

* * * * * *

NOTES.

1. From that fair dome, where suit is paid
By blast of bugle free.—P. 411.

The barony of Pennycuik, the property of sir George Clerk, bart., is held by a singular tenure; the proprietor being bound to sit upon a large rocky fragment, called the Buckstane, and wind three blasts of a horn, when the king shall come to hunt on the Borough Muir, near Edinburgh. Hence, the family have adopted, as their crest, a demi-forester proper, winding a horn, with the motto, *Free for a Blast*. The beautiful mansion-house of Pennycuik is much admired, both on account of the architecture and surrounding scenery.

2. To Auchendinny's hazel glade.—P. 411.

Auchendinny, situated upon the Eske, below Pennycuik, the present residence of the ingenious H. Mackenzie, esq. author of *The Man of Feeling*, &c.

3. And haunted Woodhouselee.—P. 411.

For the traditions connected with this ruinous mansion, see Notes to the ballad of *Cadyow Castle*, p. 409.

4. Who knows not Melville's beechy grove.—P. 411.

Melville castle, the seat of the honourable Robert Dundas, member for the county of Mid-Lothian, is delightfully situated upon the Eske, near Lasswade. It gives the title of viscount to his father, lord Melville.

5. And Roslin's rocky glen.—P. 411.

The ruins of Roslin castle, the baronial residence of the ancient family of St. Clair. The Gothic chapel, which is still in beautiful preservation, with the romantic and woody dell, in which they are situated, belong to the right honourable the earl of Rosslyn, the representative of the former lords of Roslin.

6. Dalkeith, which all the virtues love.—P. 411.

The village and castle of Dalkeith belonged, of old, to the famous earl of Morton, but is now the residence of the noble family of Buccleuch. The park extends along the Eske, which is there joined by its sister stream of the same name.

7. And classic Hawthornden.—P. 411.

Hawthornden, the residence of the poet Drum-

mond. A house of more modern date is enclosed, as it were, by the ruins of the ancient castle, and overhangs a tremendous precipice, upon the banks of the Eske, perforated by winding caves, which, in former times, formed a refuge to the oppressed patriots of Scotland. Here Drummond received Ben Jonson, who journeyed from London, on foot, in order to visit him. The beauty of this striking scene has been much injured, of late years, by the indiscriminate use of the axe. The traveller now looks in vain for the leafy bower,

"Where Jonson sate in Drummond's social shade."

Upon the whole, tracing the Eske from its source, till it joins the sea, at Musselburgh, no stream in Scotland can boast such a varied succession of the most interesting objects, as well as of the most romantic and beautiful scenery.

THE FIRE KING.

"The blessings of the evil genii, which are curses, were upon him." *Eastern Tale.*

This ballad was written at the request of Mr. Lewis, to be inserted in his *Tales of Wonder*. It is the third in a series of four ballads, on the subject of Elementary Spirits. The story is, however, partly historical; for it is recorded, that, during the struggles of the Latin kingdom of Jerusalem, a knight templar, called saint Alban, deserted to the Saracens, and defeated the christians in many combats, till he was finally routed and slain, in a conflict with king Baldwin, under the walls of Jerusalem.

Bold knights and fair dames, to my harp give an ear,
Of love, and of war, and of wonder to hear;
And you haply may sigh, in the midst of your glee,
At the tale of count Albert, and fair Rosalie.

O see you that castle, so strong and so high?
And see you that lady, the tear in her eye?
And see you that palmer from Palestine's land,
The shell on his hat, and the staff in his hand?

"Now palmer, gray palmer, O tell unto me,
What news bring you home from the Holy Countrie?
And how goes the warfare by Galilee's strand?
And how fare our nobles, the flower of the land?"

"O well goes the warfare by Galilee's wave,
For Gilead, and Nablous, and Ramah we have;
And well fare our nobles by Mount Lebanon,
For the heathen have lost, and the christians have won."

A fair chain of gold mid her ringlets there hung:
O'er the palmer's gray locks the fair chain has she flung;
"O palmer, gray palmer, this chain be thy fee,
For the news thou hast brought from the Holy Countrie.

"And palmer, good palmer, by Galilee's wave,
O saw ye count Albert, the gentle and brave?
When the crescent went back, and the red-cross rushed on,
O saw ye him foremost on Mount Lebanon?"

"O lady, fair lady, the tree green it grows;
O lady, fair lady, the stream pure it flows:
Your castle stands strong, and your hopes soar on high;
But lady, fair lady, all blossoms to die.

"The green boughs they wither, the thunderbolt falls,
It leaves of your castle but levin-scorched walls;
The pure stream runs muddy; the gay hope is gone;
Count Albert is prisoner on mount Lebanon."

O she's ta'en a horse, should be fleet at her speed;
And she's ta'en a sword, should be sharp at her need;
And she has ta'en shipping for Palestine's land,
To ransom count Albert from Soldanrie's hand.

Small thought had count Albert on fair Rosalie,
Small thought on his faith, or his knighthood had he;
A heathenish damsel his light heart had won,
The Soldan's fair daughter of Mount Lebanon.

"O christian, brave christian, my love wouldst thou be,
Three things must thou do ere I hearken to thee;
Our laws and our worship on thee shalt thou take;
And this thou shalt first do for Zulema's sake.

"And, next, in the cavern, where burns evermore
The mystical flame which the Kurdmans adore,
Alone, and in silence, three nights shalt thou wake;
And this thou shalt next do for Zulema's sake.

"And, last, thou shalt aid us with counsel and hand,
To drive the Frank robber from Palestine's land;
For my lord and my love then count Albert I'll take,
When all this is accomplished for Zulema's sake."

He has thrown by his helmet and cross-handled sword,
Renouncing his knighthood, denying his Lord;
He has ta'en the green caftan, and turban put on,
For the love of the maiden of fair Lebanon.

And in the dread cavern, deep deep under ground,
Which fifty steel gates and steel portals surround,
He has watched until daybreak, but sight saw he none,
Save the flame burning bright on its altar of stone.

Amazed was the princess, the Soldan amazed,
Sore murmured the priests as on Albert they gazed;
They searched all his garments, and, under his weeds,
They found, and took from him, his rosary beads.

Again in the cavern, deep deep under ground,
He watched the lone night, while the winds whistled round;
Far off was their murmur, it came not more nigh,
The flame burned unmoved, and nought else did he spy.

Loud murmured the priests, and amazed was the king,
While many dark spells of their witchcraft they sing;
They searched Albert's body, and, lo! on his breast
Was the sign of the cross, by his father impressed.

The priests they erase it with care and with pain,
And the recreant returned to the cavern again;
But, as he descended, a whisper there fell,—
It was his good angel, who bade him farewell!

High bristled his hair, his heart fluttered and beat,
And he turned him five steps, half resolved to retreat;
But his heart it was hardened, his purpose was gone,
When he thought of the maiden of fair Lebanon.

Scarce passed he the archway, the threshold scarce trod,
When the winds from the four points of heaven were abroad;

They made each steel portal to rattle and ring,
And, borne on the blast, came the dread Fire-King.

Full sore rock'd the cavern whene'er he drew nigh,
The fire on the altar blazed bickering and high;
In volcanic explosions the mountains proclaim
The dreadful approach of the monarch of flame.

Unmeasured in height, undistinguished in form,
His breath it was lightning, his voice it was storm;
I ween the stout heart of count Albert was tame,
When he saw in his terrors the monarch of flame.

In his hand a broad falchion blue glimmered thro' smoke,
And Mount Lebanon shook as the monarch he spoke:
"With this brand shalt thou conquer, thus long, and no more,
Till thou bend to the cross, and the virgin adore."

The cloud-shrouded arm gives the weapon; and, see!
The recreant receives the charmed gift on his knee:
The thunders grow distant, and faint gleam the fires,
As, borne on his whirlwind, the phantom retires.

Count Albert has armed him the paynim among,
Though his heart it was false, yet his arm it was strong;
And the red-cross waxed faint, and the crescent came on,
From the day he commanded on Mount Lebanon.

From Lebanon's forest to Galilee's wave,
The sands of Samaar drank the blood of the brave;
Till the knights of the temple, and knights of St. John,
With Salem's king Baldwin, against him came on.

The war-cymbals clattered, the trumpets replied,
The lances were couched, and they closed on each side;
And horsemen and horses count Albert o'erthrew,
Till he pierced the thick tumult king Baldwin unto.

Against the charmed blade which count Albert did wield,
The fence had been vain of the king's red-cross shield;
But a page thrust him forward the monarch before,
And cleft the proud turban the renegade wore.

So fell was the dint, that count Albert stooped low
Before the crossed shield, to his steel saddle-bow;
And scarce had he bent to the red-cross his head,
"*Bonne grace, notre dame,*" he unwittingly said.

Sore sighed the charmed sword, for its virtue was o'er,
It sprung from his grasp, and was never seen more:
But true men have said, that the lightning's red wing
Did waft back the brand to the dread Fire-King.

He clench'd his set teeth, and his gauntletted hand;
He stretched, with one buffet, that page on the strand;
As back from the stripling the broken casque rolled,
You might see the blue eyes, and the ringlets of gold.

Short time had count Albert in horror to stare
On those death-swimming eye-balls, and blood-clotted hair;

For down came the templars, like Cedron in flood,
And died their long lances in Saracen blood.

The Saracens, Kurdmans, and Ishmaelites yield
To the scallop, the saltier, and crosletted shield;
And the eagles were gorged with the infidel dead,
From Bethsaida's fountains to Napthali's head.

The battle is over on Bethsaida's plain.
Oh, who is yon paynim lies stretched mid the slain?
And who is yon page lying cold at his knee?
Oh, who but count Albert and fair Rosalie.

The lady was buried in Salem's blessed bound,
The count he was left to the vulture and hound:
Her soul to high mercy our lady did bring;
His went on the blast to the dread Fire-King.

Yet many a minstrel, in harping, can tell,
How the red-cross it conquered, the crescent it fell;
And lords and gay ladies have sighed, mid their glee,
At the tale of count Albert and fair Rosalie.

FREDERICK AND ALICE.

This tale is imitated, rather than translated, from a fragment introduced in Gœthe's *Claudina von Villa Bella*, where it is sung by a member of a gang of banditti, to engage the attention of the family, while his companions break into the castle. It owes any little merit it may possess to my friend Mr. Lewis, to whom it was sent in an extremely rude state; and who, after some material improvements, published it in his *Tales of Wonder*.

Frederick leaves the land of France,
Homeward hastes his steps to measure,
Careless casts the parting glance
On the scene of former pleasure.

Joying in his prancing steed,
Keen to prove his untried blade,
Hope's gay dreams the soldier lead
Over mountain, moor, and glade.

Helpless, ruined, left forlorn,
Lovely Alice wept alone;
Mourned o'er love's fond contract torn,
Hope, and peace, and honour flown.

Mark her breast's convulsive throbs!
See, the tear of anguish flows!
Mingling soon with bursting sobs,
Loud the laugh of frenzy rose.

Wild she cursed, and wild she prayed;
Seven long days and nights are o'er;
Death in pity brought his aid,
As the village bell struck four.

Far from her, and far from France,
Faithless Frederick onward rides;
Marking, blith, the morning's glance
Mantling o'er the mountain's sides.

Heard ye not the boding sound,
As the tongue of yonder tower,
Slowly, to the hills around,
Told the fourth, the fated hour?

Starts the steed, and snuffs the air,
Yet no cause of dread appears;
Bristles high the rider's hair,
Struck with strange mysterious fears.

Desperate, as his terrors rise,
In the steed the spur he hides;

From himself in vain he flies;
Anxious, restless, on he rides.

Seven long days, and seven long nights,
Wild he wandered, wo the while!
Ceaseless care, and causeless frights,
Urge his footsteps many a mile.

Dark the seventh sad night descends;
Rivers swell, and rain-streams pour!
While the deafening thunder lends
All the terrors of its roar.

Weary, wet, and spent with toil,
Where his head shall Frederick hide?
Where, but in yon ruined aisle,
By the lightning's flash descried.

To the portal, dank and low,
Fast his steed the wanderer bound;
Down a ruined staircase slow,
Next his darkling way he wound.

Long drear vaults before him lie!
Glimmering lights are seen to glide!
"Blessed Mary, hear my cry!
Deign a sinner's steps to guide!"

Often lost their quivering beam,
Still the lights move slow before,
Till they rest their ghastly gleam
Right against an iron door.

Thundering voices from within,
Mixed with peals of laughter, rose;
As they fell, a solemn strain
Lent its wild and wond'rous close!

Midst the din, he seemed to hear
Voice of friends, by death removed;
Well he knew that solemn air,
'Twas the lay that Alice loved.

Hark! for now a solemn knell
Four times on the still night broke;
Four times, at its deadened swell,
Echoes from the ruins spoke.

As the lengthened clangours die,
Slowly opes the iron door!
Straight a banquet met his eye,
But a funeral's form it wore!

Coffins for the seats extend;
All with black the board was spread;
Girt by parent, brother, friend,
Long since numbered with the dead!

Alice, in her grave-clothes bound,
Ghastly smiling, points a seat;
All arose, with thundering sound;
All the expected stranger greet.

High their meagre arms they wave,
Wild their notes of welcome swell;
"Welcome, traitor, to the grave!
Perjured, bid the light farewell!"

THE WILD HUNTSMEN.

This is a translation, or rather an imitation, of the *Wilde Jager* of the German poet Bürger. The tradition upon which it is founded bears, that formerly a wildgrave, or keeper of a royal forest, named Falkenburg, was so much addicted to the pleasures of the chase, and otherwise so extremely profligate and cruel, that he not only followed this unhallowed amusement on the Sabbath, and other days consecrated to religious duty, but accompanied it with the most unheard-of oppression upon the poor peasants who were under his vassalage. When this second Nimrod died, the people adopted a superstition, founded probably on the many various uncouth sounds heard in the depth of a German forest, during the silence of the night. They conceived they still heard the cry of the wildgrave's hounds; and the well-known cheer of the deceased hunter, the sound of his horse's feet, and the rustling of the branches before the game, the pack, and the sportsmen, are also distinctly discriminated; but the phantoms are rarely, if ever, visible. Once, as a benighted *chasseur* heard this infernal chase pass by him, at the sound of the halloo, with which the spectre Huntsman cheered his hounds, he could not refrain from crying, "*Huick zu, Falkenburg!*" (Good sport to ye, Falkenburg!) "Dost thou wish me good sport?" answered a hoarse voice; "thou shalt share the game;" and there was thrown at him what seemed to be a huge piece of foul carrion. The daring *chasseur* lost two of his best horses soon after, and never perfectly recovered the personal effects of this ghostly greeting. This tale, though told with some variation, is universally believed all over Germany.

The French had a similar tradition concerning an aerial hunter, who infested the forest of Fontainebleau. He was sometimes visible; when he appeared as a huntsman, surrounded with dogs, a tall grisly figure. Some account of him may be found in "Sully's Memoirs," who says he was called, *Le Grand Veneur*. At one time he chose to hunt so near the palace, that the attendants, and, if I mistake not, Sully himself, came out into the court, supposing it was the sound of the king returning from the chase. This phantom is elsewhere called saint Hubert.

The superstition seems to have been very general, as appears from the following fine poetical description of this phantom chase, as it was heard in the wilds of Ross-shire.

"Ere since, of old, the haughty thanes of Ross,—
So to the simple swain tradition tells,—
Were wont with clans, and ready vassals throng'd,
To wake the bounding stag, or guilty wolf,
There oft is heard, at midnight, or at noon,
Beginning faint, but rising still more loud,
And nearer, voice of hunters, and of hounds,
And horns hoarse-winded, blowing far and keen:—
Forthwith the hubbub multiplies; the gale
Labours with wilder shrieks and rifer din
Of hot pursuit; the broken cry of deer
Mangled by throttling dogs; the shouts of men,
And hoofs thick beating on the hollow hill.
Sudden the grazing heifer in the vale
Starts at the noise, and both the herdsman's ears
Tingle with inward dread. Aghast, he eyes
The mountain's height, and all the ridges round,
Yet not one trace of living wight discerns;
Nor knows, o'erawed, and trembling as he stands,
To what, or whom, he owes his idle fear,
To ghost, to witch, to fairy, or to fiend;
But wonders, and no end of wondering finds."

Scottish Descriptive Poems, pp. 167, 168.

A posthumous miracle of father Lesly, a Scottish capuchin, related to his being buried on a hill haunted by these unearthly cries of hounds and huntsmen. After his sainted relics had been deposited there, the noise was never heard more. The reader will find this, and other miracles, recorded in the life of father Bonaventura, which is written in the choicest Italian.

The wildgrave winds his bugle horn,
To horse, to horse! halloo, halloo!
His fiery courser snuffs the morn,
And thronging serfs their lord pursue.

The eager pack, from couples freed,
Dash through the bush, the brier, the brake;
While answering hound, and horn, and steed,
The mountain echoes startling wake.

The beams of God's own hallowed day
Had painted yonder spire with gold,
And, calling sinful man to pray,
Loud, long, and deep the bell had tolled:
But still the wildgrave onward rides;
Halloo, halloo! and hark again!
When, spurring from opposing sides,
Two stranger horsemen join the train.

Who was each stranger, left and right,
Well may I guess, but dare not tell;
The right hand steed was silver white,
The left, the swarthy hue of hell.

The right hand horseman, young and fair,
His smile was like the morn of May;
The left, from eye of tawny glare,
Shot midnight lightning's lurid ray.

He waved his huntsman's cap on high,
Cried, "Welcome, welcome, noble lord!
What sport can earth, or sea, or sky,
To match the princely chase, afford?"

"Cease thy loud bugle's clanging knell,"
Cried the fair youth, with silver voice;
"And for devotion's choral swell,
Exchange the rude unhallowed noise.

"To-day, the ill-omened chase forbear,
Yon bell yet summons to the fane;
To-day the warning spirit hear,
To-morrow thou may'st mourn in vain."

"Away, and sweep the glades along!"
The sable hunter hoarse replies;
"To muttering monks leave matin song,
And bells, and books, and mysteries."

The wildgrave spurred his ardent steed,
And, lanching forward with a bound,
"Who, for thy drowsy priest-like rede,
Would leave the jovial horn and hound?

"Hence, if our manly sport offend!
With pious fools go chant and pray:
Well hast thou spoke, my dark-browed friend;
Halloo, halloo! and, hark away!"

The wildgrave spurred his courser light,
O'er moss and moor, o'er holt and hill;
And on the left, and on the right,
Each stranger horseman followed still.

Up springs, from yonder tangled thorn,
A stag more white than mountain snow:
And louder rung the wildgrave's horn,
"Hark forward, forward! holla, ho!"

A heedless wretch has crossed the way;
He gasps, the thundering hoofs below:
But, live who can, or die who may,
Still, "Forward, forward!" on they go.

See, where yon simple fences meet,
A field with autumn's blessings crowned;
See, prostrate at the wildgrave's feet,
A husbandman, with toil embrowned:

"O mercy, mercy, noble lord!
Spare the poor's pittance," was his cry,
"Earned by the sweat these brows have poured,
In scorching hour of fierce July."

Earnest the right hand stranger pleads,
The left still cheering to the prey,
The impetuous earl no warning heeds,
But furious holds the onward way.

"Away, thou hound! so basely born,
Or dread the scourge's echoing blow!"
Then loudly rung his bugle horn,
"Hark forward, forward, holla, ho!"

So said, so done: a single bound
Clears the poor labourer's humble pale;
Wild follows man, and horse, and hound,
Like dark December's stormy gale.

And man, and horse, and hound, and horn,
Destructive sweep the field along;
While joying o'er the wasted corn,
Fell Famine marks the maddening throng.

Again uproused, the timorous prey
Scours moss, and moor, and holt, and hill;
Hard run, he feels his strength decay,
And trusts for life his simple skill.

Too dangerous solitude appeared;
He seeks the shelter of the crowd;
Amid the flock's domestic herd
His harmless head he hopes to shroud.

O'er moss, and moor, and holt, and hill,
His track the steady blood-hounds trace;
O'er moss and moor, unwearied still,
The furious earl pursues the chase.

Full lowly did the herdsman fall;
"O spare, thou noble baron, spare
These herds, a widow's little all;
These flocks, an orphan's fleecy care."

Earnest the right-hand stranger pleads,
The left still cheering to the prey;
The earl nor prayer nor pity heeds,
But furious keeps the onward way.

"Unmannered dog! To stop my sport
Vain were thy cant and beggar whine,
Though human spirits, of thy sort,
Were tenants of these carrion kine!"

Again he winds his bugle horn,
"Hark forward, forward, holla, ho!"
And through the herd, in ruthless scorn,
He cheers his furious hounds to go.

In heaps the throttled victims fall;
Down sinks their mangled herdsman near;
The murderous cries the stag appal,—
Again he starts, new nerved by fear.

With blood besmeared, and white with foam,
While big the tears of anguish pour,
He seeks, amid the forest's gloom,
The humble hermit's hallowed bower.

But man and horse, and horn and hound,
Fast rattling on his traces go;
The sacred chapel rung around
With, "Hark away! and, holla, ho!"

All mild, amid the rout profane,
The holy hermit poured his prayer;
"Forbear with blood God's house to stain;
Revere his altar, and forbear!

"The meanest brute has rights to plead,
Which, wronged by cruelty, or pride,
Draw vengeance on the ruthless head:
Be warned at length, and turn aside."

Still the fair horseman anxious pleads;
The black, wild whooping, points the prey:
Alas! the earl no warning heeds,
But frantic keeps the forward way.

"Holy or not, or right or wrong,
Thy altar, and its rites, I spurn;
Not sainted martyrs' sacred song,
Not God himself, shall make me turn!"

He spurs his horse, he winds his horn,
"Hark forward, forward, holla, ho!"
But off, on whirlwind's pinions borne,
The stag, the hut, the hermit, go.

And horse, and man, and horn, and hound,
And clamour of the chase was gone;
For hoofs, and howls, and bugle sound,
A deadly silence reigned alone.

Wild gazed the affrighted earl around;
He strove in vain to wake his horn;
In vain to call; for not a sound
Could from his anxious lips be borne.

He listens for his trusty hounds;
No distant baying reached his ears:
His courser, rooted to the ground,
The quickening spur unmindful bears.

Still dark and darker frown the shades,
Dark, as the darkness of the grave;
And not a sound the still invades,
Save what a distant torrent gave.

High o'er the sinner's humbled head
At length the solemn silence broke;
And from a cloud of swarthy red,
The awful voice of thunder spoke.

"Oppressor of creation fair!
Apostate spirit's hardened tool!
Scorner of God! Scourge of the poor!
The measure of thy cup is full.

"Be chased forever through the wood;
For ever roam the affrighted wild;
And let thy fate instruct the proud,
God's meanest creature is his child."

'Twas hushed: one flash, of sombre glare,
With yellow tinged the forests brown;
Up rose the wildgrave's bristling hair,
And horror chilled each nerve and bone.

Cold poured the sweat in freezing rill;
A rising wind began to sing;
And louder, louder, louder still,
Brought storm and tempest on its wing.

Earth heard the call! Her entrails rend;
From yawning rifts, with many a yell,
Mixed with sulphureous flames, ascend
The misbegotten dogs of hell.

What ghastly Huntsman next arose,
Well may I guess, but dare not tell;
His eye like midnight lightning glows,
His steed the swarthy hue of hell.

The wildgrave flies o'er bush and thorn,
With many a shriek of helpless wo;
Behind him hound, and horse, and horn,
And, "Hark away, and holla, ho!"

With wild despair's reverted eye,
Close, close behind, he marks the throng,
With bloody fangs, and eager cry,
In frantic fear he scours along.

Still, still shall last the dreadful chase,
Till time itself shall have an end
By day, they scour earth's caverened space,
At midnight's witching hour, ascend.

This is the horn, and hound, and horse,
That oft the lated peasant hears;
Appalled he signs the frequent cross,
When the wild din invades his ears.

The wakeful priest oft drops a tear
For human pride, for human wo,
When, at his midnight mass, he hears
The infernal cry of "Holla, ho!"

WILLIAM AND HELEN.

Imitated from the "Lenore" of Bürger.

The author had resolved to omit the following version of a well-known poem, in any collection which he might make of his poetical trifles. But the publishers having pleaded for its admission, the author has consented, though not unaware of the disadvantage at which this youthful essay (for it was written in 1795) must appear with those which have been executed by much more able hands, in particular that of Mr. Taylor of Norwich, and that of Mr. Spencer.

The following translation was written long before the author saw any other, and originated in the following circumstances. A lady of high rank in the literary world read this romantic tale, as translated by Mr. Taylor, in the house of the celebrated professor Dugald Stuart of Edinburgh. The author was not present, nor indeed in Edinburgh at the time; but a gentleman who had the pleasure of hearing the ballad, afterwards told him the story, and repeated the remarkable chorus,—

"Tramp! tramp! along the land they rode,
Splash! splash! along the sea;
Hurrah! hurrah! the dead can ride!
Dost fear to ride with me?"

In attempting a translation, then intended only to circulate among friends, the present author did not hesitate to make use of this impressive stanza; for which freedom he has since obtained the forgiveness of the ingenious gentleman to whom it properly belongs.

From heavy dreams fair Helen rose,
And ey'd the dawning red:
"Alas, my love, thou tarriest long!
O art thou false or dead?"

With gallant Frederick's princely power
He sought the bold crusade;
But not a word from Judah's wars
Told Helen how he sped.

With Paynim and with Saracen
At length a truce was made,
And every knight returned to dry
The tears his love had shed.

Our gallant host was homeward bound
With many a song of joy;
Green wav'd the laurel in each plume,
The badge of victory.

And old and young, and sire and son,
To meet them crowd the way,
With shouts, and mirth, and melody,
The debt of love to pay.

Full many a maid her true love met,
And sobb'd in his embrace,
And flutt'ring joy in tears and smiles,
Array'd full many a face.

Nor joy nor smile for Helen sad;
She sought the host in vain;
For none could tell her William's fate,
If faithless, or if slain.

The martial band is past and gone;
She rends her raven hair,

And in distraction's bitter mood
She weeps with wild despair.

"O rise, my child," her mother said,
"Nor sorrow thus in vain;
A perjured lover's fleeting heart
No tears recal again."

"O mother, what is gone is gone;
What's lost for ever lorn:
Death, death alone can comfort me;
O had I ne'er been born!

"O break, my heart, O break at once!
Drink my life-blood, despair!
No joy remains on earth for me,
For me in heaven no share."

"O enter not in judgment, Lord!"
The pious mother prays;
"Impute not guilt to thy frail child,
She knows not what she says.

"O say thy pater-noster, child!
O turn to God and grace!
His will, that turn'd thy bliss to bale,
Can change thy bale to bliss."

"O mother, mother, what is bliss?
O mother, what is bale?
My William's love was heaven on earth,
Without it earth is hell.

"Why should I pray to ruthless heav'n,
Since my lov'd William's slain?
I only pray'd for William's sake,
And all my prayers were vain."

"O take the sacrament, my child,
And check these tears that flow;
By resignation's humble prayer,
O hallowed be thy wo!"

"No sacrament can quench this fire,
Or slake this scorching pain;
No sacrament can bid the dead
Arise and live again.

"O break, my heart, O break at once!
Be thou my god, despair!
Heaven's heaviest blow has fall'n on me,
And vain each fruitless prayer."

"O enter not in judgment, Lord,
With thy frail child of clay!
She knows not what her tongue has spoke;
Impute it not, I pray!

"Forbear, my child, this desp'rate wo,
And turn to God and grace;
Well can devotion's heavenly glow
Convert thy bale to bliss."

"O mother, mother, what is bliss?
O mother, what is bale?
Without my William what were heaven,
Or with him what were hell?"

Wild she arraigns the eternal doom,
Upbraids each sacred power,
Till spent, she sought her silent room,
All in the lonely tower.

She beat her breast, she wrung her hands,
Till sun and day were o'er,
And through the glimm'ring lattice shone
The twinkling of the star.

Then crash! the heavy draw-bridge fell,
That o'er the moat was hung;
And clatter! clatter! on its boards
The hoof of courser rung.

The clank of echoing steel was heard,
As off the rider bounded,
And slowly on the winding-stair
A heavy footstep sounded.

And hark! and hark! a knock—Tap! tap!
A rustling stifled noise;—
Door-latch and tinkling staples ring;—
At length a whisp'ring voice.

"Awake, awake, arise, my love!
How, Helen, dost thou fare?
Wak'st thou or sleep'st? laugh'st thou or weep'st?
Hast thought on me, my fair?"

"My love! my love!—so late by night!—
I wak'd, I wept for thee:
Much have I borne since dawn of morn;
Where, William, could'st thou be?"

"We saddled late—From Hungary
I rode since darkness fell;
And to its bourne we both return
Before the matin bell."

"O rest this night within my arms,
And warm thee in their fold!
Chill howls through hawthorn bush the wind;
My love is deadly cold."

"Let the wind howl through hawthern bush!
This night we must away;
The steed is wight, the spur is bright;
I cannot stay till day.

"Busk, busk, and boune! Thou mount'st behind
Upon my black barb steed:
O'er stock and stile a hundred miles,
We haste to bridal bed."

"To-night—to-night a hundred miles!—
O dearest William, stay!
The bell strikes twelve—dark dismal hour.
O wait, my love, till day!"

"Look here, look here—the moon shines clear,
Full fast, I ween, we ride;
Mount and away! for ere the day
We reach our bridal bed.

"The black barb snorts, the bridal rings;
Haste, busk, and boune, and seat thee!
The feast is made, the chamber spread,
The bridal guests await thee."

Strong love prevail'd: she busks, she bounes,
She mounts the barb behind,
And round her darling William's waist
Her lily arms she twined.

And hurry! hurry! off they rode,
As fast as fast might be;
Spurn'd from the courser's thundering heels,
The flashing pebbles flee.

And on the right and on the left,
Ere they could snatch a view,
Fast, fast each mountain, mead, and plain,
And cot and castle flew.

"Sit fast—dost fear?—The moon shines clear,
Fleet goes my barb—keep hold!
Fear'st thou?"—"O no!" she faintly said;
"But why so stern and cold?

"What yonder rings? what yonder sings?
Why shrieks the owlet gray?"
"'Tis death-bell's clang, 'tis funeral song,
The body to the clay.

"With song and clang, at morrow's dawn,
Ye may inter the dead:

To-night I ride, with my young bride,
To deck our bridal bed.

"Come with thy choir, thou coffin'd guest,
To swell our nuptial song!
Come, priest, to bless our marriage feast!
Come all, come all along!"

Ceas'd clang and song; down sunk the bier;
The shrouded corpse arose:
And hurry! hurry! all the train
The thundering steed pursues.

And forward! forward! on they go;
High snorts the straining steed;
Thick pants the rider's labouring breath,
As headlong on they speed.

"O William, why this savage haste?
And where thy bridal bed?"
"'Tis distant far, low, damp, and chill,
And narrow, trustless maid."

"No room for me?"—"Enough for both;—
Speed, speed, my barb, thy course!"
O'er thund'ring bridge, through boiling surge,
He drove the furious horse.

Tramp! tramp! along the land they rode,
Splash! splash! along the sea;
The scourge is wight, the spur is bright,
The flashing pebbles flee.

Fled past on right and left how fast
Each forest, grove, and bower;
On right and left fled past how fast
Each city, town, and tower.

"Dost fear? dost fear? The moon shines clear;
Dost fear to ride with me?—
Hurrah! hurrah! The dead can ride!"
"O William, let them be!—

"See there, see there! What yonder swings
And creaks 'mid whistling rain?"
"Gibbet and steel, th' accursed wheel;
A murd'rer in his chain.—

"Hollo! thou felon, follow here:
To bridal bed we ride;
And thou shalt prance a fetter dance
Before me and my bride."

And hurry! hurry! clash, clash, clash!
The wasted form descends;
And, fleet as wind through hazel bush,
The wild career attends.

Tramp! tramp! along the land they rode,
Splash! splash! along the sea;
The scourge is red, the spur drops blood,
The flashing pebbles flee.

How fled what moonshine faintly show'd!
How fled what darkness hid!
How fled the earth beneath their feet,
The heav'n above their head!

"Dost fear? dost fear? The moon shines clear,
And well the dead can ride;
Does faithful Helen fear for them?"
"O leave in peace the dead!"

"Barb! barb! methinks I hear the cock;
The sand will soon be run:
Barb! barb! I smell the morning air;
The race is well nigh done."

Tramp! tramp! along the land they rode,
Splash! splash! along the sea;
The scourge is red, the spur drops blood,
The flashing pebbles flee.

"Hurrah! hurrah! well ride the dead;
The bride, the bride is come!
And soon we reach the bridal bed,
For, Helen, here's my home."

Reluctant on its rusty hinge
Revolv'd an iron door,
And by the pale moon's setting beam
Were seen a church and tow'r.

With many a shriek and cry whiz round
The birds of midnight scared;
And rustling like autumnal leaves,
Unhallow'd ghosts were heard.

O'er many a tomb and tomb-stone pale
He spurr'd the fiery horse,
Till sudden at an open grave
He check'd the wond'rous course.

The falling gauntlet quits the rein,
Down drops the casque of steel,
The cuirass leaves his shrinking side,
The spur his gory heel.

The eyes desert the naked skull,
The mould'ring flesh the bone,
Till Helen's lily arms entwine
A ghastly skeleton.

The furious barb snorts fire and foam,
And, with a fearful bound,
Dissolves at once in empty air,
And leaves her on the ground.

Half seen by fits, by fits half heard,
Pale spectres fleet along,
Wheel round the maid in dismal dance,
And howl the funeral song.

"E'en when the heart's with anguish cleft,
Revere the doom of heav'n.
Her soul is from her body reft;
Her spirit be forgiven!"

THE BATTLE OF SEMPACH.

These verses are a literal translation of an ancient Swiss ballad upon the battle of Sempach, fought 9th July, 1386, being the victory by which the Swiss cantons established their independence. The author is Albert Tchudi, denominated the Souter, from his profession of a shoemaker. He was a citizen of Lucerne, esteemed highly among his countrymen, both for his powers as a *Meistersinger* or minstrel, and his courage as a soldier; so that he might share the praise conferred by Collins on Eschylus, that—

> ——Not alone he nursed the poet's flame,
> But reached from Virtue's hand the patriot steel.

The circumstance of their being written by a poet returning from the well-fought field he describes, and in which his country's fortune was secured, may confer on Tchudi's verses an interest which they are not entitled to claim from their poetical merit. But ballad poetry, the more literally it is translated, the more it loses its simplicity, without acquiring either grace or strength; and therefore some of the faults of the verses must be imputed to the translator's feeling it a duty to keep as closely as possible to his original. The various puns, rude attempts at pleasantry, and disproportioned episdoes, must be set down to Tchudi's account, or to the taste of his age.

The military antiquary will derive some amusement from the minute particulars which the martial poet has recorded. The mode in which the

Austrian men-at-arms received the charge of the Swiss was by forming a phalanx, which they defended with their long lances. The gallant Winkelried, who sacrificed his own life by rushing among the spears, clasping in his arms as many as he could grasp, and thus opening a gap in these iron battalions, is celebrated in Swiss history. When fairly mingled together, the unwieldy length of their weapons, and cumbrous weight of their defensive armour, rendered the Austrian men-at-arms a very unequal match for the light-armed mountaineers. The victories obtained by the Swiss over the German chivalry, hitherto deemed as formidable on foot as on horse-back, led to important changes in the art of war. The poet describes the Austrian knights and squires as cutting the peaks from their boots ere they could act upon foot, in allusion to an inconvenient piece of foppery, often mentioned in the middle ages. Leopold III, archduke of Austria, called "The handsome man-at-arms," was slain in the battle of Sempach, with the flower of his chivalry.

'Twas when among our linden trees
The bees had housed in swarms,
(And gray-hair'd peasants say that these
Betoken foreign arms,)

Then look'd we down to Willisow,
The land was all in flame;
We knew the archduke Leopold
With all his army came.

The Austrian nobles made their vow,
So hot their heart and bold,
"On Switzer carles we'll trample now,
And slay both young and old."

With clarion loud, and banner proud,
From Zurich on the lake,
In martial pomp and fair array,
Their onward march they make.

"Now list, ye lowland nobles all,
Ye seek the mountain strand,
Nor wot ye what shall be your lot
In such a dangerous land.

"I rede ye, shrive you of your sins,
Before you further go;
A skirmish in Helvetian hills
May send your souls to wo."

"But where now shall we find a priest,
Or shrift that he may hear?"
"The Switzer priest* has ta'en the field,
He deals a penance drear.

"Right heavily upon your head
He'll lay his hand of steel;
And with his trusty partizan
Your absolution deal."

'Twas on a Monday morning then,
The corn was steep'd in dew,
And merry maids had sickles ta'en,
When the host to Sempach drew.

The stalwart men of fair Lucerne
Together have they join'd;
The pith and core of manhood stern,
Was none cast looks behind.

It was the lord of Hare castle,
And to the duke he said,
"You little band of brethren true
Will meet us undismay'd."

"O Hare-castle,* thou heart of hare!"
Fierce Oxenstern replied;
"Shalt see then how the game will fare."
The taunting knight replied.

There was lacing then of helmets bright,
And closing ranks amain;
The peaks they hew'd from their boot-points
Might well nigh load a wain.†

And thus, they to each other said,
"Yon handful down to hew
Will be no boastful tale to tell,
The peasants are so few."

The gallant Swiss confederates there,
They pray'd to God aloud,
And he display'd his rainbow fair
Against a swarthy cloud.

Then heart and pulse throb'd more and more
With courage firm and high,
And down the good confed'rates bore
On the Austrian chivalry.

The Austrian lion‡ 'gan to growl,
And toss his main and tail;
And ball, and shaft, and cross-bow bolt
Went whistling forth like hail.

Lance, pike, and halberd, mingled there,
The game was nothing sweet;
The boughs of many a stately tree
Lay shiver'd at their feet.

The Austrian men-at-arms stood fast,
So close their spears they laid:
It chafed the gallant Winkelried,
Who to his comrades said—

"I have a virtuous wife at home,
A wife and infant son;
I leave them to my country's care,—
This field shall soon be won.

"These nobles lay their spears right thick,
And keep full firm array,
Yet shall my charge their order break,
And make my brethren way."

He rushed against the Austrian band,
In desperate career,
And with his body, breast, and hand,
Bore down each hostile spear.

Four lances splintered on his crest,
Six shivered in his side;
Still on the serried files he press'd—
He broke their ranks, and died.

This patriot's self-devoted deed,
First tamed the lion's mood,
And the four forest cantons freed
From thraldom by his blood.

Right where his charge had made a lane,
His valiant comrades burst,
With sword, and axe, and partizan,
And hack, and stab, and thrust.

The daunted lion 'gan to whine,
And granted ground amain,

* All the Swiss clergy who were able to bear arms fought in this patriotic war.

* In the original, *Haasenstein*, or *Hare-stone*.

†This seems to allude to the preposterous fashion, during the middle ages, of wearing boots with the points or peakes turned upwards, and so long that, in some cases, they were fastened to the knees of the wearer with small chains. When they alighted to fight upon foot, it would seem that the Austrian gentlemen found it necessary to cut off these peaks, that they might move with the necessary activity.

‡ A pun on the archduke's name, Leopold.

The mountain bull,* he bent his brows,
And gored his sides again.

Then lost was banner, spear, and shield,
At Sempach in the flight,
The cloister vaults at Konigsfield
Hold many an Austrian knight.

It was the archduke Leopold,
So lordly would he ride,
But he came against the Switzer churls,
And they slew him in his pride.

The heifer said unto the bull,
"And shall I not complain?
There came a foreign nobleman
To milk me on the plain.

"One thrust of thine outrageous horn
Has gall'd the knight so sore,
That to the churchyard he is borne,
To range our glens no more."—

An Austrian noble left the stour,
And fast the flight 'gan take;
And he arrived in luckless hour
At Sempach on the lake.

He and his squire a fisher call'd,
(His name was Hans Von Rot)
"For love, or meed, or charity,
Receive us in thy boat."

Their anxious call the fisher heard,
And, glad the meed to win,
His shallop to the shore he steer'd,
And took the flyers in.

And while against the tide and wind
Hans stoutly row'd his way,
The noble to his follower sign'd
He should the boatman slay.

The fisher's back was to them turn'd,
The squire his dagger drew,
Hans saw his shadow in the lake,
The boat he overthrew.

He whelm'd the boat, and as they strove,
He stunn'd them with his oar;
"Now, drink ye deep, my gentle sirs,
You'll ne'er stab boatman more.

"Two gilded fishes in the lake
This morning have I caught,
Their silver scales may much avail,
Their carrion flesh is naught."

It was a messenger of wo
Has sought the Austrian land;
"Ah! gracious lady, evil news!
My lord lies on the strand.

"At Sempach, on the battle-field,
His bloody corpse lies there."
"Ah, gracious God!" the lady cried,
"What tidings of despair!"

Now, would you know the minstrel wight,
Who sings of strife so stern,
Albert the Souter is he hight,
A burgher of Lucerne.

A merry man was he, I wot,
The night he made the lay,
Returning from the bloody spot,
Where God had judged the day.

* A pun on the *Urus*, or wild bull, which gives name to the canton of Uri.

THE NOBLE MORINGER:

AN ANCIENT BALLAD,

Translated from the German.

THE original of these verses occurs in a collection of German popular songs, entitled *Sammlung Deutschen Volkslieder*, Berlin, 1807, published by Messrs. Busching and Von der Hagen, both, and more especially the last, distinguished for their acquaintance with the ancient popular poetry and legendary history of Germany.

In the German editor's notice of the ballad, it is stated to have been extracted from a manuscript Chronicle of Nicolaus Thomann, chaplain to St. Leonard in Weisenhorn, which bears the date 1533; and the song is stated by the author to have been generally sung in the neighbourhood at that early period. Thomann, as quoted by the German editor, seems faithfully to have believed the event he narrates. He quotes tomb-stones and obituaries to prove the existence of the personages of the ballad, and discovers that there actually died on the 11th May, 1349, a lady Von Neuffen, countess of Marstetten, who was by birth of the house of Moringer. This lady he supposes to have been Moringer's daughter mentioned in the ballad. He quotes the same authority for the death of Berckhold Von Neuffen in the same year. The editors, on the whole, seem to embrace the opinion of professor Smith, of Ulm, who, from the language of the ballad, ascribes its date to the 15th century.

The legend itself turns on an incident not peculiar to Germany, and which perhaps was not unlikely to happen in more instances than one, when crusaders abode long in the Holy Land, and their disconsolate dames received no tidings of their fate. A story very similar in circumstances, but without the miraculous machinery of saint Thomas, is told of one of the ancient lords of Haighhall, in Lancashire, the patrimonial inheritance of the late countess of Balcarras; and the particulars are represented on stained glass upon a window in that ancient manor-house.

I.

O, will you hear a knightly tale
Of old Bohemian day,
It was the noble Moringer
In wedlock bed he lay;
He halsed and kissed his dearest dame,
That was as sweet as May,
And said, "Now, lady of my heart,
Attend the words I say.

II.

"'Tis I have vow'd a pilgrimage
Unto a distant shrine,
And I must seek saint Thomas-land,
And leave the land that's mine;
Here shalt thou dwell the while in state,
So thou wilt pledge thy fay,
That thou for my return wilt wait
Seven twelvemonths and a day."

III.

Then out and spoke that lady bright,
Sore troubled in her cheer,
"Now, tell me true, thou noble knight,
What order takest thou here;
And who shall lead thy vassal band,
And hold thy lordly sway,
And be thy lady's guardian true
When thou art far away?"

IV.

Out spoke the noble Moringer,
"Of that have thou no care,
There's many a valiant gentleman
Of me holds living fair;
The trustiest shall rule my land,
My vassals and my state,
And be a guardian tried and true
To thee, my lovely mate.

V.

"As christian-man, I needs must keep
The vow which I have plight;
When I am far in foreign land,
Remember thy true knight;
And cease, my dearest dame, to grieve,
For vain were sorrow now,
But grant thy Moringer his leave,
Since God hath heard his vow."

VI.

It was the noble Moringer
From bed he made him bowne,
And met him there his chamberlain,
With ewer and with gown:
He flung the mantle on his back,
'Twas furr'd with miniver,
He dipp'd his hand in water cold,
And bathed his forehead fair.

VII.

"Now hear," he said, "sir Chamberlain,
True vassal art thou mine,
And such the trust that I repose
In that proved worth of thine,
For seven years shalt thou rule my towers,
And lead my vassal train,
And pledge thee for my lady's faith
Till I return again."

VIII.

The chamberlain was blunt and true,
And sturdily said he,
"Abide, my lord, and rule your own,
And take this rede from me;
That woman's faith's a brittle trust—
Seven twelvemonths didst thou say?
I'll pledge me for no lady's truth
Beyond the seventh fair day."

IX.

The noble baron turn'd him round,
His heart was full of care,
His gallant esquire stood him nigh,
He was Marstetten's heir,
To whom he spoke right anxiously,
"Thou trusty squire to me,
Wilt thou receive this weighty trust
When I am o'er the sea?

X.

"To watch and ward my castle strong,
And to protect my land,
And to the hunting or the host
To lead my vassal band;
And pledge thee for my lady's faith,
Till seven long years are gone,
And guard her as our lady dear
Was guarded by saint John."

XI.

Marstetten's heir was kind and true,
But fiery, hot, and young,
And readily he answer made,
With too presumptuous tongue,
"My noble lord, cast care away,
And on your journey wend,
And trust this charge to me until
Your pilgrimage have end.

XII.

"Rely upon my plighted faith,
Which shall be truly tried,
To guard your lands, and ward your towers,
And with your vassals ride;
And for your lovely lady's faith,
So virtuous and so dear,
I'll gage my head it knows no change,
Be absent thirty year."

XIII.

The noble Moringer took cheer
When thus he heard him speak,
And doubt forsook his troubled brow,
And sorrow left his cheek;
A long adieu he bids to all—
Hoists top-sails and away,
And wanders in saint Thomas-land
Seven twelvemonths and a day.

XIV.

It was the noble Moringer
Within an orchard slept,
When on the baron's slumbering sense
A boding vision crept;
And whisper'd in his ear a voice,
"'Tis time, sir knight, to wake,
Thy lady and thine heritage
Another master take.

XV.

"Thy tower another banner knows,
Thy steeds another rein,
And stoop them to another's will
Thy gallant vassal train;
And she, the lady of thy love,
So faithful once and fair,
This night, within thy father's hall,
She weds Marstetten's heir."

XVI.

It is the noble Moringer
Starts up and tears his beard,
"Oh would that I had ne'er been born!
What tidings have I heard!
To lose my lordship and my lands
The less would be my care,
But, God! that e'er a squire untrue
Should wed my lady fair!

XVII.

"O good saint Thomas, hear," he pray'd,
"My patron saint art thou,
A traitor robs me of my land
Even while I pay my vow!
My wife he brings to infamy
That was so pure of name,
And I am far in foreign land,
And must endure the shame."

XVIII.

It was the good saint Thomas, then,
Who heard his pilgrim's prayer,
And sent a sleep so deep and dead
That it o'erpower'd his care;
He waked in fair Bohemian land,
Outstretch'd beside a rill,
High on the right a castle stood,
Low on the left a mill.

XIX.

The Moringer he started up
As one from spell unbound,
And, dizzy with surprise and joy,
Gazed wildly all around;

"I know my father's ancient towers,
The mill, the stream I know,
Now blessed be my patron saint
Who cheer'd his pilgrim's wo!"

XX.

He leant upon his pilgrim staff,
And to the mill he drew,
So alter'd was his goodly form,
That none their master knew;
The baron to the miller said,
"Good friend, for charity,
Tell a poor palmer in your land
What tidings may there be?"

XXI.

The miller answer'd him again,
"He knew of little news,
Save that the lady of the land
Did a new bridegroom choose;
Her husband died in distant land,
Such is the constant word,
His death sits heavy on our souls,
He was a worthy lord.

XXII.

"Of him I held the little mill
Which wins me living free,
God rest the baron in his grave,
He still was kind to me;
And when saint Martin's tide comes round,
And millers take their toll,
The priest that prays for Moringer
Shall have both cope and stole."

XXIII.

It was the noble Moringer
To climb the hill began,
And stood before the bolted gate
A wo and weary man;
"Now help me, every saint in heaven,
That can compassion take,
To gain the entrance of my hall
This woful match to break."

XXIV.

His very knock it sounded sad,
His call was sad and slow,
For heart and head, and voice and hand,
Were heavy all with wo;
And to the warder thus he spoke:
"Friend, to thy lady say,
A pilgrim from saint Thomas-land
Craves harbour for a day.

XXV.

"I've wander'd many a weary step,
My strength is well nigh done,
And if she turn me from her gate
I'll see no morrow's sun;
I pray, for sweet saint Thomas' sake,
A pilgrim's bed and dole,
And for the sake of Moringer's,
Her once loved husband's soul."

XXVI.

It was the stalwart warder then
He came his dame before,
"A pilgrim worn and travel-toil'd
Stands at the castle door;
And prays, for sweet saint Thomas' sake,
For harbour and for dole,
And for the sake of Moringer,
Thy noble husband's soul."

XXVII.

The lady's gentle heart was moved,
"Do up the gate," she said,
"And bid the wanderer welcome be
To banquet and to bed:
And since he names my husband's name,
So that he lists to stay,
These towers shall be his harbourage
A twelve-month and a day."

XXVIII.

It was the stalwart warder then
Undid the portal broad,
It was the noble Moringer
That o'er the threshold strode;
"And have thou thanks, kind heaven," he said,
Though from a man of sin,
That the true lord stands here once more
His castle gate within."

XXIX.

Then up the hall paced Moringer,
His step was sad and slow,
It sat full heavy on his heart,
None seem'd their lord to know;
He sat him on a lowly bench,
Oppress'd with wo and wrong,
Short space he sat, but ne'er to him
Seem'd little space so long.

XXX.

Now spent was day, and feasting o'er,
And come was evening hour,
The time was nigh when new-made brides
Retire to nuptial bower;
"Our castle's wont," a brides-man said,
"Hath been both firm and long,
No guest to harbour in our halls
Till he shall chant a song."

XXXI.

Then spoke the youthful bridegroom there,
As he sat by the bride,
"My merry minstrel folks," quoth he,
"Lay shalm and harp aside;
Our pilgrim guest must sing a lay,
The castle's rule to hold;
And well his guerdon will I pay
With garment and with gold."

XXXII.

"Chill flows the lay of frozen age,"
'Twas thus the pilgrim sung,
"Nor golden meed, nor garment gay,
Unlocks her heavy tongue;
Once did I sit, thou bridegroom gay,
At board as rich as thine,
And by my side as fair a bride,
With all her charms, was mine.

XXXIII.

"But time traced furrows on my face,
And I grew silver-hair'd,
For locks of brown, and cheeks of youth,
She left this brow and beard;
Once rich, but now a palmer poor,
I tread life's latest stage,
And mingle with your bridal mirth
The lay of frozen age."

XXXIV.

It was the noble lady there
This woful lay that hears,
And for the aged pilgrim's grief
Her eye was dimm'd with tears
She bade her gallant cup-bearer
A golden beaker take,
And bear it to the palmer poor
To quaff it for her sake.

XXXV.

It was the noble Moringer
That dropp'd, amid the wine,
A bridal-ring of burning gold,
So costly and so fine;
Now listen, gentles, to my song,
It tells you but the sooth,
'Twas with that very ring of gold
He pledged his bridal truth.

XXXVI.

Then to the cup-bearer he said,
"Do me one kindly deed,
And should my better days return,
Full rich shall be thy meed;
Bear back the golden cup again
To yonder bride so gay,
And crave her, of her courtesy,
To pledge the palmer gray."

XXXVII.

The cup-bearer was courtly bred,
Nor was the boon denied,
The golden cup he took again,
And bore it to the bride;
"Lady," he said, "your reverend guest
Sends this, and bids me pray,
That, in thy noble courtesy,
Thou pledge the palmer gray."

XXXVIII.

The ring hath caught the lady's eye,
She views it close and near,
Then might you hear her shriek aloud,
"The Moringer is here!"
Then might you see her start from seat,
While tears in torrents fell,
But whether 'twas for joy or wo,
The ladies best can tell.

XXXIX.

But loud she utter'd thanks to heaven,
And every saintly power,
That had return'd the Moringer
Before the midnight hour;
And loud she utter'd vow on vow,
That never was there bride
That had like her preserved her troth,
Or been so sorely tried.

XL.

"Yes, here I claim the praise," she said,
"To constant matrons due,
Who keep the troth that they have plight
So steadfastly and true;
For count the term how'er you will,
So that you count aright,
Seven twelvemonths and a day are out
When bells toll twelve to-night.

XLI.

It was Marstetten then rose up,
His falchion there he drew,
He kneel'd before the Moringer,
And down his weapon threw;
"My oath and knightly faith are broke,"
These were the words he said,
"Then take, my liege, thy vassal's sword,
And take thy vassal's head."

XLII.

The noble Moringer he smiled,
And then aloud did say,
"He gathers wisdom that hath roam'd
Seven twelvemonths and a day.
My daughter now hath fifteen years,
Fame speaks her sweet and fair,
I give her for the bride you lose,
And name her for my heir.

XLIII.

"The young bridegroom hath youthful bride,
The old bridegroom the old,
Whose faith was kept till term and tide
So punctually were told;
But blessings on the warder kind
That oped my castle gate,
For had I come at morrow tide,
I came a day too late."

Miscellanies.

WAR-SONG

OF THE ROYAL EDINBURGH LIGHT DRAGOONS.

Nennius. Is not peace the end of arms?
Caratach. Not where the cause implies a general conquest.

Had we a difference with some petty isle,
Or with our neighbours, Britons, for our landmarks,
The taking in of some rebellious lord,
Or making head against a slight commotion,
After a day of blood, peace might be argued:
But where we grapple for the land we live on,
The liberty we hold more dear than life,
The gods we worship, and, next these, our honours,
And, with those, swords, that know no end of battle—
Those men, beside themselves, allow no neighbour,
Those minds, that, where the day is, claim inheritance,
And, where the sun makes ripe the fruit, their harvest,
And, where they march, but measure out more ground
To add to Rome——
It must not be.—No! as they are our foes,
Let's use the peace of honour—that's fair dealing;
But in our hands our swords. The hardy Roman,
That thinks to graft himself into my stock,
Must first begin his kindred under ground,
And be allied in ashes.—— *Bonduca.*

THE following War-song was written during the apprehension of an invasion. The corps of volunteers, to which it was addressed, was raised in 1797, consisting of gentlemen, mounted and armed at their own expense. It still subsists, as the Right Troop of the Royal Mid-Lothian Light Cavalry, commanded by the honourable lieutenant-colonel Dundas. The noble and constitutional measure, of arming freemen in defence of their own rights, was nowhere more successful than in Edinburgh, which furnished a force of 3000 armed and disciplined volunteers, including a regiment of cavalry, from the city and county, and two corps of artillery, each capable of serving twelve guns. To such a force, above all others, might, in similar circumstances, be applied the exhortation of our ancient Galgacus: "*Proinde ituri in aciem, et majores vestros et posteros cogitate.*"

To horse! to horse! the standard flies,
The bugles sound the call;
The Gallic navy stems the seas,
The voice of battle's on the breeze,
Arouse ye, one and all!

From high Dunedin's towers we come,
A band of brothers true;
Our casques the leopard's spoils surround,

With Scotland's hardy thistle crowned;
We boast the red and blue.*

Though tamely crouch to Gallia's frown
Dull Holland's tardy train;
Their ravished toys though Romans mourn,
Though gallant Switzers vainly spurn,
And, foaming, gnaw the chain;

O! had they marked the avenging call†
Their brethren's murder gave,
Disunion ne'er their ranks had mown,
Nor patriot valour, desperate grown,
Sought freedom in the grave!

Shall we, too, bend the stubborn head,
In Freedom's temple born,
Dress our pale cheeks in timid smile,
To hail a master in our isle,
Or brook a victor's scorn?

No! though destruction o'er the land
Come pouring as a flood,
The sun, that sees our falling day,
Shall mark our sabres' deadly sway,
And set that night in blood.

For gold let Gallia's legions fight,
Or plunder's bloody gain;
Unbribed, unbought, our swords we draw,
To guard our king, to fence our law,
Nor shall their edge be vain.

If ever breath of British gale
Shall fan the tricolour,
Or footstep of invader rude,
With rapine foul, and red with blood,
Pollute our happy shore,—

Then farewell home! and farewell friends!
Adieu each tender tie!
Resolved, we mingle in the tide,
Where charging squadrons furious ride,
To conquer or to die.

To horse! to horse! the sabres gleam;
High sounds our bugle call;
Combined by honour's sacred tie,
Our word is, *Laws and Liberty!*
March forward, one and all!

THE NORMAN HORSE-SHOE.

Air—*The War-song of the Men of Glamorgan.*

The Welsh, inhabiting a mountainous country, and possessing only an inferior breed of horses, were usually unable to encounter the shock of the Anglo Norman cavalry. Occasionally, however, they were successful in repelling the invaders; and the following verses are supposed to celebrate a defeat of Clare, earl of Striguil and Pembroke, and of Neville, baron of Chepstow, lords-marchers of Monmouthshire. Rymny is a stream which divides the counties of Monmouth and Glamorgan: Caerphili, the scene of the supposed battle, is a vale upon its banks, dignified by the ruins of a very ancient castle.

Red glows the forge in Striguil's bounds,
And hammers din and anvil sounds,
And armourers, with iron toil,
Barb many a steed for battle's broil.
Foul fall the hand which bends the steel
Around the coursers' thundering heel,
That e'er shall dint a sable wound
On fair Glamorgan's velvet ground!

From Chepstow's towers, ere dawn of morn,
Was heard afar the bugle horn;
And forth, in banded pomp and pride,
Stout Clare and fiery Neville ride.
They swore their banners broad should gleam,
In crimson light, on Rymny's stream;
They vowed, Caerphili's sod should feel
The Norman charger's spurning heel.

And sooth they swore,—the sun arose,
And Rymny's wave with crimson glows,
For Clare's red banner, floating wide,
Rolled down the stream to Severn's tide!
And sooth they vowed—the trampled green
Showed where hot Neville's charge had been:
In every sable hoof tramp stood
A Norman horseman's curdling blood!

Old Chepstow's brides may curse the toil
That armed stout Clare for Cambrian broil;
Their orphans long the art may rue,
For Neville's war-horse forged the shoe.
No more the stamp of armed steed
Shall dint Glamorgan's velvet mead;
Nor trace be there, in early spring,
Save of the fairies' emerald ring.

THE LAST WORDS OF CADWALLON.

Air—*Dafydd y Garreg-wen.**

There is a tradition that Dafydd y Garreg-wen, a famous Welsh bard, being on his death-bed, called for his harp, and composed the sweet melancholy air to which these verses are united, requesting that it might be performed at his funeral.

Dinas Emlinn, lament, for the moment is nigh,
When mute in the woodlands thine echoes shall die;
No more by sweet Teivi Cadwallon shall rave,
And mix his wild notes with the wild dashing wave.

In spring and in autumn, thy glories of shade
Unhonour'd shall flourish, unhonour'd shall fade;
For soon shall be lifeless the eye and the tongue,
That view'd them with rapture, with rapture that sung.

Thy sons, Dinas Emlinn, may march in their pride,
And chase the proud Saxon from Prestatyn's side;
But where is the harp shall give life to their name?
And where is the bard shall give heroes their fame?

And oh, Dinas Emlinn! thy daughters so fair,
Who heave the white bosom, and wave the dark hair;
What tuneful enthusiast shall worship their eye,
When half of their charms with Cadwallon shall die?

Then adieu, silver Teivi! I quit thy loved scene,
To join the dim choir of the bards who have been;
With Lewarch, and Meilor, and Merlin the Old,
And sage Taliessin, high harping to hold.

And adieu, Dinas Emlinn! still green be thy shades,
Unconquer'd thy warriors, and matchless thy maids!

---

* The royal colours.

† The allusion is to the massacre of the Swiss guards, on the fatal 10th of August, 1792. It is painful, but not useless, to remark, that the passive temper with which the Swiss regarded the death of their bravest countrymen, mercilessly slaughtered in discharge of their duty, encouraged and authorized the progressive injustice by which the Alps, once the seat of the most virtuous and free people upon the continent, have, at length, been converted into the citadel of a foreign and military despot. A state degraded is half enslaved.

* David of the white Rock.

And thou, whose faint warblings my weakness can tell,
Farewell, my lov'd harp! my last treasure, farewell!

THE MAID OF TORO.

O, low shone the sun on the fair lake of Toro,
And weak were the whispers that waved the dark wood,
All as a fair maiden, bewildered in sorrow,
Sorely sigh'd to the breezes, and wept to the flood.
"O, saints! from the mansions of bliss lowly bending;
Sweet Virgin! who hearest the suppliant's cry;
Now grant my petition, in anguish ascending,
My Henry restore, or let Eleanor die!

All distant and faint were the sounds of the battle,
With the breezes they rise, with the breezes they fail,
Till the shout, and the groan, and the conflict's dread rattle,
And the chase's wild clamour, came loading the gale.
Breathless she gazed on the woodlands so dreary;
Slowly approaching a warrior was seen;
Life's ebbing tide mark'd his footsteps so weary,
Cleft was his helmet, and wo was his mien.

"O, save thee, fair maid, for our armies are flying!
O, save thee, fair maid, for thy guardian is low!
Deadly cold on you heath thy brave Henry is lying;
And fast through the woodland approaches the foe."—
Scarce could he falter the tidings of sorrow,
And scarce could she hear them, benumb'd with despair:
And when the sun sunk on the sweet lake of Toro,
For ever he set to the brave and the fair.

HELLVELLYN.

In the spring of 1805, a young gentleman of talents, and of a most amiable disposition, perished by losing his way on the mountain Hellvellyn. His remains were not discovered till three months afterwards, when they were found guarded by a faithful terrier bitch, his constant attendant during frequent solitary rambles through the wilds of Cumberland and Westmoreland.

I climbed the dark brow of the mighty Hellvellyn,
Lakes and mountains beneath me gleamed misty and wide;
All was still, save by fits when the eagle was yelling,
And starting around me the echoes replied.
On the right, Striden-edge round the Red-tarn was bending,
And Catchedicam its left verge was defending,
One huge nameless rock in the front was ascending,
When I marked the sad spot where the wanderer had died.

Dark green was the spot mid the brown mountain-heather,
Where the pilgrim of nature lay stretched in decay,
Like the corpse of an outcast abandoned to weather,
Till the mountain winds wasted the tenantless clay.
Nor yet quite deserted, though lonely extended,
For, faithful in death, his mute favourite attended,
The much loved remains of her master defended,
And chased the hill fox and the raven away.

How long didst thou think that his silence was slumber?
When the wind waved his garment, how oft didst thou start?
How many long days and long weeks didst thou number,
Ere he faded before thee, the friend of thy heart?
And, O! was it meet, that, no requium read o'er him,
No mother to weep, and no friend to deplore him,
And thou, little guardian, alone stretched before him,
Unhonoured the pilgrim from life should depart?

When a prince to the fate of the peasant has yielded,
The tapestry waves dark round the dim-lighted hall;
With scutcheons of silver the coffin is shielded,
And pages stand mute by the canopied pall:
Through the courts, at deep midnight, the torches are gleaming;
In the proudly arched chapel the banners are beaming;
Far adown the long aisle sacred music is streaming,
Lamenting a chief of the people should fall.

But meeter for thee, gentle lover of nature,
To lay down thy head like the meek mountain lamb;
When, wildered, he drops from some cliff huge in stature,
And draws his last sob by the side of his dam.
And more stately thy couch by this desert lake lying,
Thy obsequies sung by the gray plover flying,
With one faithful friend but to witness thy dying,
In the arms of Hellvellyn and Catchedicam.

JOCK OF HAZELDEAN.

Air—*A Border Melody.*

The first stanza of this ballad is ancient. The others were written for Mr. Campbell's *Albyn's Anthology.*

"Why weep ye by the tide, ladie?
Why weep ye by the tide?
I'll wed ye to my youngest son,
And ye sall be his bride:
And ye sall be his bride, ladie,
Sae comely to be seen"—
But aye she loot the tears down fa'
For Jock of Hazeldean.

"Now let this wilful grief be done,
And dry that cheek so pale;
Young Frank is chief of Errington,
And lord of Langley-dale;
His step is first in peaceful ha',
His sword in battle keen"—
But aye she loot the tears down fa'
For Jock of Hazeldean.

"A chain o' gold ye sall not lack,
Nor braid to bind your hair;
Nor mettled hound, nor managed hawk,
Nor palfrey fresh and fair;
And you, the foremost o' them a',
Shall ride our forest queen"—
But aye she loot the tears down fa'
For Jock of Hazeldean.

The kirk was deck'd at morning-tide,
The tapers glimmer'd fair;
The priest and bridegroom wait the bride,
And dame and knight are there.
They sought her both by bower and ha',
The ladie was not seen!
She's o'er the border, and awa'
Wi' Jock of Hazeldean.

LULLABY OF AN INFANT CHIEF.

Air—*Gadil gu lo.**

O hush thee, my babie, thy sire was a knight;
Thy mother a lady, both lovely and bright;
The woods and the glens, from the towers which we see,
They all are belonging, dear baby, to thee.
O ho ro, i ri ri, cadil gu lo,
O ho ro, i ri ri, &c.

O fear not the bugle, though loudly it blows,
It calls but the warders that guard thy repose;
Their bows would be bended, their blades would be red,
Ere the step of a foeman draws near to thy bed.
O ho ro, i ri ri, &c.

O hush thee, my babie, the time soon will come,
When thy sleep shall be broken by trumpet and drum;
Then hush thee, my darling, take rest while you may,
For strife comes with manhood, and waking with day.
O ho ro, i ri ri, &c.

PIBROCH OF DONALD DHU.

Written for *Albyn's Anthology.*
Air—*Piobair of Dhonuil Duidh.*†

This is a very ancient pibroch belonging to the clan Mac-Donald, and supposed to refer to the expedition of Donald Balloch, who, in 1431, launched from the Isles with a considerable force, invaded Lochaber, and at Inverlochy defeated and put to flight the earls of Marr and Caithness, though at the head of an army superior to his own. The words of the set theme, or melody, to which the pipe variations are applied, run thus in Gaelic:

Piobaireachd Dhonuil, piobaireachd Dhonuil;
Piobaireachd Dhonuil Duidh, piobaireachd Dhonuil;
Piobaireachd Dhonuil Duidh, piobaireachd Dhonuil;
Piob agus bratach air faiche Inverlochi.

The pipe-summons of Donald the Black,
The pipe-summons of Donald the Black,
The war-pipe and the pennon are on the gathering-place at Inverlochy.

Pibroch of Donuil Dhu,
Pibroch of Donuil,
Wake thy wild voice anew,
Summon Clan-Conuil.
Come away, come away,
Hark to the summons!
Come in your war array,
Gentles and commons.

Come from deep glen, and
From mountain so rocky,
The war-pipe and pennon
Are at Inverlochy:
Come every hill-plaid, and
True heart that wears one,
Come every steel blade, and
Strong hand that bears one.
Leave untended the herd,
The flock without shelter;
Leave the corpse uninterr'd,
The bride at the altar;
Leave the deer, leave the steer,
Leave nets and barges;
Come with your fighting gear,
Broad swords and targes.
Come as the winds come, when
Forests are rended;
Come as the waves come, when
Navies are stranded;
Faster come, faster come,
Faster and faster,
Chief, vassal, page, and groom,
Tenant and master.

Fast they come, fast they come;
See how they gather!
Wide waves the eagle plume,
Blended with heather.
Cast your plaids, draw your blades,
Forward each man set!
Pibroch of Donuil Dhu,
Knell for the onset!

NORA'S VOW.

Written for *Albyn's Anthology.*
Air—*Cha teid mis a chaoidh.**

In the original Gaelic, the lady makes protestations that she will not go with the Red earl's son until the swan should build in the cliff, and the eagle in the lake—until one mountain should change places with another, and so forth. It is but fair to add, that there is no authority for supposing that she altered her mind—except the vehemence of her protestation.

Hear what highland Nora said,
"The earlie's son I will not wed,
Should all the race of nature die,
And none be left but he and I.
For all the gold, for all the gear,
And all the lands both far and near,
That ever valour lost or won,
I would not wed the earlie's son."
"A maiden's vows," old Callum spoke,
"Are lightly made, and lightly broke;
The heather on the mountain's height
Begins to bloom in purple light;
The frost-wind soon shall sweep away
That lustre deep from glen and brae;
Yet Nora, ere its bloom be gone,
May blithly wed the earlie's son."
"The swan," she said, "the lake's clear breast
May barter for the eagle's nest;
The Awe's fierce stream may backward turn,
Ben-Cruaichan fall, and crush Kilchurn,
Our kilted clans, when blood is high,
Before their foes may turn and fly;
But I, were all these marvels done,
Would never wed the earlie's son."

Still in the water-lily's shade
Her wonted nest the wild swan made,
Ben-Cruaichan stands as fast as ever,
Still downward foams the Awe's fierce river;
To shun the clash of foeman's steel,
No highland brogue has turned the heel;

* "Sleep on till day." These words, adapted to a melody somewhat different from the original, are sung in my friend Mr. Terry's drama of Guy Mannering.
† The pibroch of Donald the Black.

* "I will never go with him."

But Nora's heart is lost and won,
—She's wedded to the earlie's son!

MAC-GREGOR'S GATHERING.

Written for *Albyn's Anthology.*

Air—*Thain' a Grigalach.**

THESE verses are adapted to a very wild, yet lively gathering-tune, used by the Mac-Gregors. The severe treatment of this clan, their outlawry, and the proscription of their very name, are alluded to in the ballad.

THE moon's on the lake, and the mist's on the brae,
And the clan has a name that is nameless by day!
Then gather, gather, gather, Gregalach!
Gather, gather, gather, &c.

Our signal for fight, that from monarchs we drew,
Must be heard but by night in our vengeful haloo!
Then haloo, Gregalach! haloo, Gregalach!
Haloo, haloo, haloo, Gregalach, &c.

Glen Orchy's proud mountains, Coalchuirn and her towers,
Glenstrae and Glenlyon no longer are ours:
We're landless, landless, landless, Gregalach!
Landless, landless, landless, &c.

But doom'd and devoted by vassal and lord,
Macgregor has still both his heart and his sword!
Then courage, courage, courage, Gregalach!
Courage, courage, courage, &c.

If they rob us of name, and pursue us with beagles,
Give their roofs to the flame, and their flesh to the eagles!
Then vengeance, vengeance, vengeance, Gregalach!
Vengeance, vengeance, vengeance, &c.

While there's leaves in the forest, and foam on the river,
Mac-Gregor, despite them, shall flourish for ever!
Come then, Gregalach, come then, Gregalach,
Come then, come then, come then, &c.

Through the depths of Loch Katrine the steed shall career,
O'er the peak of Ben Lomond the galley shall steer,
And the rocks of Craig Royston like icicles melt,
Ere our wrongs be forgot, or our vengeance unfelt!
Then gather, gather, gather, Gregalach!
Gather, gather, gather, &c.

* "The Mac-Gregor is come."

DONALD CAIRD'S COME AGAIN.

Air—*Malcolm Caird's come again.*†

CHORUS.

DONALD *Caird's come again!*
Donald Caird's come again!
Tell the news in brugh and glen,
Donald Caird's come again!

Donald Caird can lilt and sing,
Blithly dance the hieland fling,
Drink till the gudeman be blind,
Fleech till the gudewife be kind;
Hoop a leglen, clout a pan,
Or crack a pow wi' ony man;
Tell the news in brugh and glen,
Donald Caird's come again.

Donald Caird's come again!
Donald Caird's come again!
Tell the news in brugh and glen,
Donald Caird's come again!

Donald Caird can wire a maukin,
Kens the wiles o' dun deer staukin;
Leisters kipper, makes a shift
To shoot a muir-fowl in the drift;
Water-bailiffs, rangers, keepers,
He can wauk when they are sleepers;
Not for bountith or reward
Dare ye mell wi' Donald Caird.

Donald Caird's come again!
Donald Caird's come again!
Gar the bagpipes hum amain,
Donald Caird's come again!

Donald Caird can drink a gill
Fast as hostler-wife can fill;
Ilka ane that sells good liquor
Kens how Donald bends a bicker.
When he's fou he's stout and saucy,
Keeps the cantle of the cawsey;
Highland chief and lowland laird,
Maun gi'e room to Donald Caird!

Donald Caird's come again!
Donald Caird's come again!
Tell the news in brugh and glen,
Donald Caird's come again!

Steek the amrie, lock the kist,
Else some gear may weel be mist;
Donald Caird finds orra things
Where Allan Gregor fand the tings;
Dunts of kebbeck, taits of woo,
Whiles a hen and whiles a sow,
Webs or duds frae hedge or yard—
'Ware the wuddie, Donald Caird!

Donald Caird's come again!
Donald Caird's come again!
Dinna let the shirra ken
Donald Caird's come again!

On Donald Caird the doom was stern,
Craig to tether, legs to airn;
But Donald Caird, wi' mickle study,
Caught the gift to cheat the wuddie;
Rings of airn, and bolts of steel,
Fell like ice frae hand and heel!
Watch the sheep in fauld and glen,
Donald Caird's come again!

Donald Caird's come again!
Donald Caird's come again!
Dinna let the justice ken
Donald Caird's come again!

† Caird signifies Tinker.

MACKRIMMON'S LAMENT.

Air—*Cha till mi tuille.*"*

MACKRIMMON, hereditary piper to the laird of Macleod, is said to have composed this lament when the clan was about to depart upon a distant and dangerous expedition. The minstrel was impressed with a belief, which the event verified, that he was to be slain in the approaching feud; and hence the Gaelic words, "*Cha till mi tuille; ged thillis Macleod, cha till Macrimmon,*" "I shall never return; although Macleod returns, yet Mackrimmon shall never return!" The piece is but too well known, from its being the strain with

* "We return no more."

which the emigrants from the west highlands and isles usually take leave of their native shore.

Macleod's wizard flag from the gray castle sallies,
The rowers are seated, unmoor'd are the galleys;
Gleam war-axe and broad sword, clang target and quiver,
As Mackrimmon sings, "Farewell to Dunvegan for ever!
Farewell to each cliff, on which breakers are foaming;
Farewell each dark glen, in which red deer are roaming;
Farewell lonely Skye, to lake, mountain, and river,
Macleod may return but Mackrimmon, shall never!
"Farewell the bright clouds that on Quillan are sleeping;
Farewell the bright eyes in the Dun that are weeping;
To each minstrel delusion, farewell!—and for ever—
Mackrimmon departs, to return to you never!
The *banshee's* wild voice sings the death-dirge before me,
The pall of the dead for a mantle hangs o'er me;
But my heart shall not flag, and my nerves shall not shiver,
Though devoted I go—to return again never!
"Too oft shall the notes of Mackrimmon's bewailing
Be heard when the Gael on their exile are sailing;
Dear land! to the shores, whence unwilling we sever,
Return—return—return—shall we never!
Cha till, cha till, cha till sin tuille!
Cha till, cha till, cha till sin tuille,
Cha till, cha till, cha till sin tuille,
Ged thillis Macleod, cha till Macrimmon!"

ON ETTRICK FOREST'S MOUNTAINS DUN.*

On Ettrick Forest's mountains dun,
'Tis blith to hear the sportsman's gun,
And seek the heath-frequenting brood
Far through the noon-day solitude;
By many a cairn and trenched mound,
Where chiefs of yore sleep lone and sound,
And springs, where gray-haired shepherds tell,
That still the fairies love to dwell.

Along the silver streams of Tweed,
'Tis blith the mimic fly to lead,
When to the hook the salmon springs,
And the line whistles through the rings:
The boiling eddy see him try,
Then dashing from the current high,
Till watchful eye and cautious hand
Have led his wasted strength to land.

'Tis blith along the midnight tide,
With stalwart arm the boat to guide;
On high the dazzling blaze to rear,
And heedful plunge the barbed spear;
Rock, wood, and scaur, emerging bright,
Fling on the stream their ruddy light,
And from the bank our band appears
Like genii, armed with fiery spears.

'Tis blith at eve to tell the tale,
How we succeed, and how we fail,
Whether at Alwyn's* lordly meal,
Or lowlier board of Ashestiel;†
While the gay tapers cheerly shine,
Bickers the fire, and flows the wine—
Days free from thought, and nights from care,
My blessing on the forest fair!

THE SUN UPON THE WIERDLAW-HILL.

Air—*Rimhin aluin 'stu mo run.*

The air, composed by the editor of *Albyn's Anthology*. The words written for Mr. George Thomson's *Scottish Melodies*.

The sun upon the Wierdlaw-hill,
In Ettrick's vale, is sinking sweet,
The westland wind is hush and still,
The lake lies sleeping at my feet.
Yet not the landscape to mine eye
Bears those bright hues that once it bore;
Though evening, with her richest dye,
Flames o'er the hills of Ettrick's shore.

With listless look along the plain,
I see Tweed's silver current glide,
And coldly mark the holy fane
Of Melrose rise in ruined pride.
The quiet lake, the balmy air,
The hill, the stream, the tower, the tree,—
Are they still such as once they were,
Or is the dreary change in me?

Alas, the warp'd and broken board,
How can it bear the painter's dye!
The harp of strain'd and tuneless chord,
How to the minstrel's skill reply!
To aching eyes each landscape lowers,
To feverish pulse each gale blows chill;
And Araby's or Eden's bowers
Were barren as this moorland hill.

THE MAID OF ISLA.

Air—*The Maid of Isla.*

Written for Mr. George Thomson's *Scottish Melodies*.

O maid of Isla, from the cliff,
That looks on troubled wave and sky,
Dost thou not see yon little skiff
Contend with ocean gallantly?
Now beating 'gainst the breeze and surge,
And steep'd her leeward deck in foam,
Why does she war unequal urge?—
O Isla's maid, she seeks her home.

O Isla's maid, yon sea-bird mark,
Her white wing gleams through mist and spray,
Against the storm-clad, louring dark,
As to the rock she wheels away;—
Where clouds are dark and billows rave,
Why to the shelter should she come
Of cliff, exposed to wind and wave?
O maid of Isla, 'tis her home.

As breeze and tide to yonder skiff,
Thou'rt adverse to the suit I bring,
And cold as is yon wintery cliff,
Where sea-birds close their wearied wing.

* Written after a week's shooting and fishing, in which the poet had been engaged with some friends.

* *Alwyn*, the seat of the lord Somerville, now, alas! untenanted, by the lamented death of that kind and hospitable nobleman, the author's nearest neighbour and intimate friend.

† *Ashestiel*, the poet's residence at that time.

Yet cold as rock, unkind as wave,
Still, Isla's maid, to thee I come;
For in thy love, or in his grave,
Must Allan Vourich find his home.

THE FORAY.

Set to music by John Whitefield, Mus. Doc. Cam.

The last of our steers on the board has been spread,
And the last flask of wine in our goblets is red;
Up! up, my brave kinsmen! belt swords and be-gone!
There are dangers to dare, and there's spoil to be won.

The eyes, that so lately mix'd glances with ours,
For a space must be dim, as they gaze from the towers,
And strive to distinguish, through tempest and gloom,
The prance of the steed, and the toss of the plume.

The rain is descending; the wind rises loud;
And the moon her red beacon has veil'd with a cloud;
'Tis the better, my mates, for the warder's dull eye
Shall in confidence slumber, nor dream we are nigh.

Our steeds are impatient! I hear my blith gray!
There is life in his hoof-clang, and hope in his neigh;
Like the flash of a meteor, the glance of his mane
Shall marshal your march through the darkness and rain.

The drawbridge has dropp'd, the bugle has blown;
One pledge is to quaff yet—then mount and be-gone!—
To their honour and peace, that shall rest with the slain;
To their health, and their glee, that see Teviot again!

THE MONKS OF BANGOR'S MARCH.

Air—*Ymdaith Mionge.*

Written for Mr. George Thomson's *Welch Melodies.*

Ethelrid, or Olfrid, king of Northumberland, having besieged Chester in 613, and Brockmael, a British prince, advancing to relieve it, the religious of the neighbouring monastery of Bangor marched in procession, to pray for the success of their countrymen. But the British being totally defeated, the heathen victor put the monks to the sword, and destroyed their monastery. The tune to which these verses are adapted, is called the Monks' March, and is supposed to have been played at their ill-omened procession.

When the heathen trumpet's clang
Round belcaguer'd Chester rang,
Veiled nun and friar gray
March'd from Bangor's fair abbaye;
High their holy anthem sounds,
Cestria's vale the hymn rebounds,
Floating down the sylvan Dee,
O miserere, Domine!

On the long procession goes,
Glory round their crosses glows,
And the Virgin-mother mild
In their peaceful banner smiled;
Who could think such saintly band
Doom'd to feel unhallow'd hand!
Such was the divine decree,
O miserere, Domine!

Bands that masses only sung,
Hands that censers only swung,
Met the northern bow and bill,
Heard the war-cry wild and shrill;
Wo to Brochmael's feeble hand,
Wo to Olfrid's bloody brand,
Wo to Saxon cruelty,
O miserere, Domine!

Weltering amid warriors slain,
Spurn'd by steeds with bloody mane,
Slaughtered down by heathen blade,
Bangor's peaceful monks are laid:
Word of parting rest unspoke,
Mass unsung, and bread unbroke;
For their souls for charity,
Sing *O miserere, Domine!*

Bangor! o'er the murder wail,
Long thy ruins told the tale,
Shatter'd towers and broken arch
Long recall'd the woful march;*
On thy shrine no tapers burn,
Never shall thy priests return:
The pilgrim sighs and sings for thee,
O miserere, Domine!

THE SEARCH AFTER HAPPINESS;

OR

THE QUEST OF SULTAUN SOLIMAUN.

Written in 1817.

O, for a glance of that gay muse's eye,
That lighten'd on Bandello's laughing tale,
And twinkled with a lustre shrewd and sly,
When Giam Battista bade her vision hail!†
Yet fear not, ladies, the naive detail
Given by the natives of that land canorous;
Italian license loves to leap the pale,
We Britons have the fear of shame before us,
And, if not wise in mirth, at least must be decorous.

In the far eastern clime, no great while since,
Lived sultaun Solimaun, a mighty prince,
Whose eyes, as oft as they performed their round,
Beheld all others fix'd upon the ground;
Whose ears receiv'd the same unvaried phrase,
"Sultan! thy vassal hears, and he obeys!"
All have their tastes—this may the fancy strike
Of such grave folks as pomp and grandeur like;
For me, I love the honest heart and warm
Of monarch who can amble round his farm,
Or, when the toil of state no more annoys,
In chimney-corner seek domestic joys—
I love a prince will bid the bottle pass,
Exchanging with his subjects glance and glass;
In fitting time, can, gayest of the gay,
Keep up the jest and mingle in the lay—
Such monarchs best our free-born humours suit,
But despots must be stately, stern, and mute.

This Solimaun, Serendib had in sway—
And where's Serendib? may some critic say.—
Good lack, mine honest friend, consult the chart,
Scare not my Pegasus before I start!
If Rennell has it not, you'll find, mayhap,
The isle laid down in captain Sinbad's map,—
Famed mariner! whose merciless narrations
Drove every friend and kinsman out of patience,

* William of Malmesbury says, that in his time the extent of the ruins of the monastery bore ample witness to the desolation occasioned by the massacre;—"tot semiruti parietes ecclesiarum, tot anfractus porticum, tanta turba ruderum quantum vix alibi cernas."

† The hint of the following tale is taken from *La Camiscia Magica*, a novel of Giam Battista Casti.

Till, fain to find a guest who thought them shorter,
He deign'd to tell them over to a porter—
The last edition see, by Long and Co.,
Rees, Hurst, and Orme, our fathers in the row.

Serendib found, deem not my tale a fiction—
This sultaun, whether lacking contradiction—
(A sort of stimulant which hath its uses,
To raise the spirits and reform the juices,
Sovereign specific for all sort of cures
In my wife's practice, and perhaps in yours,)
The sultaun lacking this same wholesome bitter,
Or cordial smooth, for prince's palate fitter—
Or if some Mollah had hag-rid his dreams
With Degial, Ginnistan, and such wild themes
Belonging to the Mollah's subtle craft,
I wot not—but the sultaun never laugh'd,
Scarce ate or drank, and took a melancholy
That scorn'd all remedy, profane or holy;
In his long list of melancholies, mad,
Or mazed, or dumb, hath Burton none so bad.

Physicians soon arrived, sage, ware, and tried,
As e'er scrawl'd jargon in a darken'd room;
With heedful glance the sultaun's tongue they eyed,
Peep'd in his bath, and God knows where beside,
And then in solemn accents spoke their doom:
"His majesty is very far from well."
Then each to work with his specific fell:
The Hakim Ibrahim *instanter* brought
His unguent mahazzim ai zerdukkaut,*
While Roompot, a practitioner more wily,
Relied on his munaskif al fillfily.
More and yet more in deep array appear,
And some the front assail, and some the rear;
Their remedies to reinforce and vary,
Came surgeon eke, and eke apothecary;
Till the tired monarch, though of words grown chary,
Yet dropt, to recompense their fruitless labour,
Some hint about a bow-string or a sabre.
There lack'd, I promise you, no longer speeches,
To rid the palace of those learned leeches.

Then was the council called—by their advice,
(They deem'd the matter ticklish all, and nice,
And sought to shift it off from their own shoulders,)
Tatârs and couriers in all speed were sent,
To call a sort of eastern parliament
Of feudatory chieftains and freeholders—
Such have the Persians at this very day,
My gallant Malcolm calls them *couroultai*;†
I'm not prepared to show in this slight song
That to Serendib the same forms belong,—
E'en let the learn'd go search, and tell me if I'm wrong.

The Omrahs,‡ each with hand on scimitar,
Gave, like Sempronius, still their voice for war—
"The sabre of the sultaun in its sheath
Too long has slept, nor owned the work of death;
Let the Tambourgi bid his signal rattle,
Bang the loud gong, and raise the shout of battle!
This dreary cloud that dims our sovereign's day
Shall from his kindled bosom flit away,
When the bold Lootie wheels his courser round,
And the arm'd elephant shall shake the ground.
Each noble pants to own the glorious summons—
And for the charges—Lo! your faithful commons!"
The riots who attended in their places
(Serendib language calls a farmer Riot)
Look'd ruefully in one another's faces,
From this oration auguring much disquiet,
Double assessment, forage, and free quarters;
And fearing these as China-men the Tartars,
Or as the whisker'd vermin fear the mousers,
Each fumbled in the pocket of his trowsers.

And next came forth the reverend Convocation,
Bald heads, white beards, and many a turban green,
Imaum and Mollah there of every station,
Santon, Fakir, and Calendar were seen.
Their votes were various—some advised a mosque
With fitting revenues should be erected,
With seemly gardens and with gay kiosque,
To recreate a band of priests selected:
Others opined that through the realms a dole
Be made to holy men, whose prayers might profit
The sultaun's weal in body and in soul;
But their long-headed chief, the sheik Ul-Sofit,
More closely touch'd the point;—"Thy studious mood,"
Quoth he, "O prince! hath thickened all thy blood,
And dull'd thy brain with labour beyond measure;
Wherefore relax a space and take thy pleasure,
And toy with beauty, or tell o'er thy treasure;
From all the cares of state, my liege, enlarge thee,
And leave the burthen to thy faithful clergy."

These counsels sage availed not a whit,
And so the patient (as is not uncommon
Where grave physicians lost their time and wit)
Resolved to take advice of an old woman:
His mother she, a dame who once was beauteous,
And still was call'd so by each subject duteous.
Now, whether Fatima was witch in earnest,
Or only made believe, I cannot say—
But she professed to cure disease the sternest,
By dint of magic amulet or lay;
And, when all other skill in vain was shown,
She deem'd it fitting time to use her own.

"*Sympathia magica* hath wonders done,"
(Thus did old Fatima bespeak her son,)
"It works upon the fibres and the pores,
And thus, insensibly, our health restores,
And it must help us here.—Thou must endure
The ill, my son, or travel for the cure,
Search land and sea, and get, where'er you can,
The inmost vesture of a happy man,
I mean his SHIRT, my son, which, taken warm
And fresh from off his back, shall chase your harm,
Bid every current of your veins rejoice,
And your dull heart leap light as shepherd-boy's."
Such was the counsel from his mother came.
I know not if she had some under-game,
As doctors have, who bid their patients roam
And live abroad, when sure to die at home;
Or if she thought, that, somehow or another,
Queen Regent sounded better than queen Mother;
But, says the chronicle, (who will go look it?)
That such was her advice—the sultaun took it.

All are on board—the sultaun and his train,
In gilded galley prompt to plough the main:
The old rais* was the first who questioned,
"Whither?"

* For these hard words see d'Herbelot, or the learned editor of the Recipes of Avicenna.

† See sir John Malcolm's admirable *History of Persia.*

‡ Nobility.

* Master of the vessel.

They paused—"Arabia," thought the pensive prince,
"Was call'd the happy many ages since—
For Mokha, rais."—And they came safely thither.
But not in Araby with all her balm,
Nor where Judæa weeps beneath her palm,
Not in rich Egypt, not in Nubian waste,
Could there the step of happiness be traced.
One copt alone profess'd to have seen her smile,
When Bruce his goblet fill'd at infant Nile:
She bless'd the dauntless traveller as he quaff'd,
But vanished from him with the ended draught.

"Enough of turbans," said the weary king,
"These dolimans of ours are not the thing;
Try we the Giaours, these men of coat and cap, I
Incline to think some of them must be happy;
At least they have as fair a cause as any can,
They drink good wine, and keep no Ramazan.
Then northward, ho!" The vessel cuts the sea,
And fair Italia lies upon her lee.—
But fair Italia, she who once unfurled
Her eagle-banners o'er a conquered world,
Long from her throne of domination tumbled,
Lay, by her quondam vassals, sorely humbled;
The pope himself look'd pensive, pale, and lean,
And was not half the man he once had been.
"While these the priest and those the noble fleeces,
Our poor old boot,"* they said, "is torn to pieces.
Its tops† the vengeful claws of Austria feel,
And the great devil is rending toe and heel.‡
If happiness you seek, to tell you truly,
We think she dwells with one Giovanni Bulli;
A tramontane, a heretic,—the buck,
Poffaredio! still has all the luck;
By land or ocean never strikes his flag—
And then—a perfect walking money-bag."
Off set our prince to seek John Bull's abode,
But first took France—it lay upon the road.

Monsieur Baboon, after much late commotion,
Was agitated like a settling ocean,
Quite out of sorts, and could not tell what ail'd him,
Only the glory of his house had fail'd him;
Besides, some tumours on his noddle biding,
Gave indication of a recent hiding.§
Our prince, though sultauns of such things are heedless,
Thought it a thing indelicate and needless
To ask, if at that moment he was happy,
And Monsieur, seeing that he was *comme il faut*, a
Loud voice mustered up, for "*Vive le Roi!*"
Then whisper'd, "Ave you any news of Nappy?"
The sultaun answered him with a cross question,—
"Pray, can you tell me aught of one John Bull,
That dwells somewhere beyond your herring-pool?"
The query seemed of difficult digestion,
The party shrugg'd, and grinn'd, and took his snuff,
And found his whole good breeding scarce enough.

Twitching his visage into as many puckers
As damsels wont to put into their tuckers,
(Ere liberal fashion damn'd both lace and lawn,
And bade the veil of modesty be drawn,)
Replied the Frenchman, after a brief pause,
"Jean Bool!—I vas not know him—yes, I vas—
I vas remember dat one year or two,
I saw him at one place called Vaterloo—
Ma foi! il s'est très-joliment battu,
Dat is for Englishman,—m'entendez-vous?
But den he had wit him one damn son-gun,
Rogue I no like—dey call him Vellington."
Monsieur's politeness could not hide his fret,
So Solimaun took leave and cross'd the streight.
John Bull was in his very worst of moods,
Raving of sterile farms and unsold goods;
His sugar-loaves and bales about he threw,
And on his counter beat the devil's tattoo.
His wars were ended, and the victory won,
But then 'twas reckoning-day with honest John,
And authors vouch 'twas still this worthy's way,
"Never to grumble till he came to pay;
And then he always thinks, his temper's such,
The work too little, and the pay to much.*
Yet, grumbler as he is, so kind and hearty,
That when his mortal foe was on the floor,
And past the power to harm his quiet more,
Poor John had well nigh wept for Bonaparte!
Such was the wight whom Solimaun salam'd—
"And who are you," John answered, "and be d—d?"

"A stranger, come to see the happiest man,—
So, seignior, all avouch,—in Frangistan."†—
"Happy! my tenants breaking on my hand?
Unstock'd my pastures, and untill'd my land;
Sugar and rum a drug, and mice and moths
The sole consumers of my good broad cloths—
Happy? why, cursed war and racking tax
Have left us scarcely raiment to our backs."
"In that case, seignior, I may take my leave;
I came to ask a favour—but I grieve"——
"Favour?" said John, and eyed the sultaun hard,
"It's my belief you came to break the yard!—
But, stay, you look like some poor foreign sinner,—
Take that, to buy yourself a shirt and dinner."—
With that he chuck'd a guinea at his head;
But, with due dignity, the sultaun said,—
"Permit me, sir, your bounty to decline;
A *shirt* indeed I seek, but none of thine.
Seignior, I kiss your hands, so fare you well."
"Kiss and be d——d," quoth John, "and go to hell!"

Next door to John there dwelt his sister Peg,
Once a wild lass as ever shook a leg,
When the blith bagpipe blew—but soberer now,
She *doucely* span her flax and milk'd her cow.
And whereas erst she was a needy slattern,
Nor now of wealth or cleanliness a pattern,
Yet once a month her house was partly swept,
And once a-week a plenteous board she kept.
And whereas eke the vixen used her claws,
And teeth, of yore, on slender provocation,
She now was grown amenable to laws,
A quiet soul as any in the nation;
The sole remembrance of her warlike joys
Was in old songs she sang to please her boys.
John Bull, whom, in their years of early strife,
She wont to lead a cat-and-doggish life,
Now found the woman, as he said, a neighbour,
Who look'd to the main chance, declined no labour,
Loved a long grace, and spoke a northern jargon,
And was d——d close in making of a bargain.

* The well-known resemblance of Italy in the map.
† Florence, Venice, &c.
‡ The Calabrias, infested by bands of assassins. One of the leaders was called Fra Diavolo, *i. e.* Brother Devil.
§ Or drubbing, so called in the Slang Dictionary.

* See the True-Born Englishman, by Daniel de Foe.
† Europe.

The sultaun enter'd, and he made his leg,
And with decorum curtsied sister Peg;
(She lov'd a book, and knew a thing or two,
And guess'd at once with whom she had to do.)
She bade him "sit into the fire," and took
Her dram, her cake, her kebbock from the nook;
Asked him "about the news from eastern parts;
And of her absent bairns, puir highland hearts!
If peace brought down the price of tea and pepper,
And if the *nitmugs* were grown *ony* cheaper?
Were there nae *speerings* of our Mungo Park—
Ye'll be the gentleman that wants the sark?
If ye wad buy a web o' auld wife's spinning,
I'll warrant ye it's a weel-wearing linen."

Then up got Peg, and round the house 'gan scuttle,
In search of goods her customer to nail,
Until the sultaun strain'd his princely throttle,
And hollow'd—"Ma'am, that is not what I ail.
Pray, are you happy, ma'am, in this snug glen?"
"Happy!" said Peg; "What for d'ye want to ken?
Besides, just think upon this by-gane year,
Grain wadna pay the yoking of the pleugh."
"What say you to the present?—"Meal's sae dear,
To mak their *brose* my bairns have scarce aneugh.
"The devil take the shirt," said Solimaun,
"I think my quest will end as it began.
Farewell, ma'am; nay, no ceremony, I beg—"
"Ye'll no be for the linen then?" said Peg.

Now, for the land of verdant Erin,
The sultaun's royal bark is steering,
The Emerald Isle where honest Paddy dwells,
The cousin of John Bull, as story tells.
For a long space had John, with words of thunder,
Hard looks, and harder knocks, kept Paddy under,
Till the poor lad, like boy that's flogg'd unduly,
Had gotten somewhat restive and unruly.
Hard was his lot and lodging, you'll allow,
A wigwam that would hardly serve a sow;
His landlord, and of middlemen two brace,
Had screw'd his rent up to the starving place;
His garment was a top-coat, and an old one,
His meal was a potatoe, and a cold one;
But still for fun or frolic, and all that,
In the round world was not the match of Pat.

The sultaun saw him on a holiday,
Which is with Paddy still a jolly day:
When mass is ended, and his load of sins
Confess'd, and mother church hath from her binns
Dealt forth a bonus of imputed merit,
Then is Pat's time for fancy, whim, and spirit!
To jest, to sing, to caper fair and free,
And dance as light as leaf upon the tree.
"By Mahomet," said sultaun Solimaun,
"That ragged fellow is our very man!
Rush in and seize him—do not do him hurt,
But, will he nill he, let me have his *shirt*."—
Shilela their plan was well nigh after baulking,
(Much less provocation will set it a-walking,)
But the odds that foil'd Hercules foil'd Paddy Whack:
They seized, and they floor'd, and they stripped him—alack!
Up-bubboo! Paddy had not—a shirt to his back!!!
And the king, disappointed, with sorrow and shame,
Went back to Serendib as sad as he came.

THE POACHER.

A FRAGMENT.

Welcome, grave stranger, to our green retreats,
Where health with exercise and freedom meets!
Thrice welcome, sage, whose philosophic plan
By Nature's limits metes the rights of man;
Generous as he, who now for freedom bawls,
Now gives full value for true Indian shawls;
O'er court, o'er custom-house, his shoe who flings,
Now bilks excisemen, and now bullies kings.
Like his, I ween, thy comprehensive mind
Holds laws as mouse-traps baited for mankind;
Thine eye, applausive, each sly vermin sees,
That baulks the snare, yet battens on the cheese;
Thine ear has heard, with scorn instead of awe,
Our buckskin'd justices expound the law,
Wire-draw the acts that fix for wires the pain,
And for the netted partridge noose the swain;
And thy vindictive arm would fain have broke
The last light fetter of the feudal yoke,
To give the denizens of wood and wild,
Nature's free race, to each her free-born child.
Hence hast thou mark'd, with grief, fair London's race
Mock'd with the boon of one poor Easter chase,
And long'd to send them forth as free as when
Pour'd o'er Chantilly the Parisian train,
When musket, pistol, blunderbuss, combined,
And scarce the field-pieces were left behind!
A squadron's charge each leveret's heart dismayed,
On every covey fired a bold brigade;
La douce Humanité approved the sport,
For great the alarm indeed, yet small the hurt;
Shouts patriotic solemnized the day,
And Seine re-echoed *Vive la Liberté!*
But mad *Citoyen*, meek *Monsieur* again,
With some few added links resumes his chain;
Then since such scenes to France no more are known,
Come, view with me a hero of thine own!
One, whose free actions vindicate the cause
Of sylvan liberty o'er feudal laws.

Seek we yon glades, where the proud oak o'ertops
Wide-waving seas of birch and hazel copse,
Leaving between deserted isles of land,
Where stunted heath is patch'd with ruddy sand;
And lonely on the waste the yew is seen,
Or straggling hollies spread a brighter green.
Here, little worn, and winding dark and steep,
Our scarce mark'd path descends yon dingle deep:
Follow—but heedful, cautious of a trip.
In earthly mire philosophy may slip,
Step slow and wary o'er that swampy stream,
Till, guided by the charcoal's smothering steam,
We reach the frail yet barricaded door
Of hovel formed for poorest of the poor;
No hearth the fire, no vent the smoke receives,
The walls are wattles, and the covering leaves;
For, if such hut, our forest statutes say,
Rise in the progress of one night and day,
(Though placed where still the conqueror's hests o'erawe,
And his son's stirrup shines the badge of law,)
The builder claims the unenviable boon,
To tenant dwelling, framed as slight and soon
As wigwam wild, that shrouds the native frore
On the bleak coast of frost-barr'd Labrador.*

* Such is the law in the New Forest, Hampshire, tending greatly to increase the various settlements of thieves, smugglers, and deer-stealers, who infest it. In the forest courts the presiding judge wears as a badge of office an antique stirrup, said to have been that of William Rufus. See Mr. William Rose's spirited poem, entitled "The Red King."

Approach, and through the unlatticed window peep—
Nay, shrink not back, the inmate is asleep;
Sunk mid yon sordid blankets, till the sun
Stoop to the west, the plunderer's toils are done.
Loaded and primed, and prompt for desperate hand,
Rifle and fowling-piece beside him stand,
While round the hut are in disorder laid
The tools and booty of his lawless trade;
For force or fraud, resistance or escape,
The crow, the saw, the bludgeon, and the crape.
His pilfered powder in yon nook he hoards,
And the filch'd lead the church's roof affords—
(Hence shall the rector's congregation fret,
That while his sermon's dry, his walls are wet.)
The fish-spear barb'd, the sweeping net are there,
Doe-hides, and pheasant plumes, and skins of hare,
Cordage for toils, and wiring for the snare.
Barter'd for game from chase or warren won,
Yon cask holds moonlight,* run when moon was none;
And late snatch'd spoils lie stow'd in hutch apart,
To wait the associate higgler's evening cart.

Look on his pallet foul, and mark his rest:
What scenes perturb'd are acting in his breast!
His sable brow is wet and wrung with pain,
And his dilated nostril toils in vain,
For short and scant the breath each effort draws,
And 'twixt each effort Nature claims a pause.
Beyond the loose and sable neck-cloth stretch'd,
His sinewy throat seems by convulsions twitch'd,
While the tongue falters, as to utterance loth,
Sounds of dire import—watch-word, threat, and oath.
Though, stupified by toil and drugg'd with gin,
The body sleeps, the restless guest within
Now plies on wood and wold his lawless trade,
Now in the fangs of justice wakes dismayed.—

"Was that wild start of terror and despair,
Those bursting eye-balls, and that wildered air,
Signs of compunction for a murdered hare?
Do the locks bristle and the eye-brows arch,
For grouse or partridge massacred in March?"

No, scoffer, no! Attend, and mark with awe,
There is no wicket in the gate of law!
He, that would e'er so lightly set ajar
That awful portal must undo each bar;
Tempting occasion, habit, passion, pride,
Will join to storm the breach, and force the barrier wide.

That ruffian, whom true men avoid and dread,
Whom bruisers, poachers, smugglers, call Black Ned,
Was Edward Mansell once;—the lightest heart,
That ever played on holiday his part!
The leader he in every christmas game,
The harvest feast grew blither when he came,
And liveliest on the chords the bow did glance,
When Edward named the tune and led the dance.
Kind was his heart, his passions quick and strong,
Hearty his laugh, and jovial was his song;
And if he loved a gun, his father swore,
"'Twas but a trick of youth would soon be o'er,
Himself had done the same some thirty years before."

But he, whose humours spurn law's awful yoke,
Must herd with those by whom law's bonds are broke.

The common dread of justice soon allies
The clown, who robs the warren or excise,
With sterner felons trained to act more dread,
Even with the wretch by whom his fellow bled.
Then,—as in plagues the foul contagions pass,
Leavening and festering the corrupted mass,—
Guilt leagues with guilt, while mutual motives draw,
Their hope impunity, their fear the law;
Their foes, their friends, their rendezvous the same,
Till the revenue baulk'd, or pilfered game,
Flesh the young culprit, and example leads
To darker villany and direr deeds.

Wild howled the wind the forest glades along,
And oft the owl renewed her dismal song;
Around the spot where erst he felt the wound,
Red William's spectre walked his midnight round.
When o'er the swamp he cast his blighting look,
From the green marshes of the stagnant brook
The bittern's sullen shout the sedges shook;
The waning-moon, with storm-presaging gleam,
Now gave and now withheld her doubtful beam;
The old oak stooped his arms, then flung them high,
Bellowing and groaning to the troubled sky—
'Twas then, that, couched amid the brushwood sere,
In Malwood-walk, young Mansell watched the deer:
The fattest buck received his deadly shot—
The watchful keeper heard, and sought the spot.
Stout were their hearts, and stubborn was their strife,
O'erpowered at length the outlaw drew his knife!
Next morn a corpse was found upon the fell—
The rest his waking agony may tell!

* A cant name for smuggled spirits.

THE DANCE OF DEATH.

Night and morning were at meeting
Over Waterloo;
Cocks had sung their earliest greeting,
Faint and low they crew,
For no paly beam yet shone
On the heights of Mount Saint John;
Tempest-clouds prolonged the sway
Of timeless darkness over day;
Whirlwind, thunder-clap, and shower,
Mark'd it a predestined hour.
Broad and frequent through the night
Flashed the sheets of levin-light;
Muskets, glancing lightnings back,
Show'd the dreary bivouack
Where the soldier lay,
Chill and stiff, and drench'd with rain,
Wishing dawn of morn again,
Though death should come with day.
'Tis at such a tide and hour,
Wizard, witch, and fiend have power,
And ghastly forms through mist and shower,
Gleam on the gifted ken;
And then the affrighted prophet's ear
Drinks whispers strange of fate and fear,
Presaging death and ruin near
Among the sons of men;—
Apart from Albyn's war-array,
'Twas then gray Allan sleepless lay;
Gray Allen, who, for many a day,
Had followed stout and stern,
Where through battle's rout and reel,
Storm of shot and hedge of steel,

Led the grandson of Lochiel,
Valiant Fassiefern.
Through steel and shot he leads no more,
Low-laid 'mid friends' and foemen's gore—
But long his native lake's wild shore,
And Sunart rough, and high Ardgower,
And Morven long shall tell,
And proud Ben Nevis hear with awe,
How, upon bloody Quatre-Bras,
Brave Cameron heard the wild hurra
Of conquest as he fell.

Lone on the outskirts of the host,
The weary sentinel held post,
And heard, through darkness far aloof,
The frequent clang of courser's hoof,
Where held the cloaked patrole their course,
And spurred 'gainst storm the swerving horse;
But there are sounds in Allan's ear,
Patrole nor sentinel may hear,
And sights before his eye aghast
Invisible to them have passed,
When down the destined plain
'Twixt Britain and the bands of France,
Wild as marsh-borne meteors glance,
Strange phantoms wheeled a revel dance,
And doomed the future slain.—
Such forms were seen, such sounds were heard,
When Scotland's James his march prepared
For Flodden's fatal plain;
Such, when he drew his ruthless sword,
As choosers of the slain, adored
The yet unchristen'd Dane.
An indistinct and phantom band,
They wheeled their ring-dance hand in hand,
With gesture wild and dread;
The seer, who watched them ride the storm,
Saw through their faint and shadowy form
The lightnings flash more red;
And still their ghastly roundelay
Was of the coming battle-fray,
And of the destined dead.

SONG.

Wheel the wild dance,
While lightnings glance,
And thunders rattle loud,
And call the brave
To bloody grave,
To sleep without a shroud.

Our airy feet,
So light and fleet,
They do not bend the rye,
That sinks its head when whirlwinds rave,
And swells again in eddying wave,
As each wild gust blows by;
But still the corn,
At dawn of morn,
Our fatal steps that bore,
At eve lies waste,
A trampled paste
Of blackening mud and gore.

Wheel the wild dance,
While lightnings glance,
And thunders rattle loud,
And call the brave
To bloody grave,
To sleep without a shroud.

Wheel the wild dance,
Brave sons of France!
For you our ring makes room;
Make space full wide
For martial pride,
For banner, spear, and plume.
Approach, draw near,
Proud cuirassier!
Room for the men of steel!
Through crest and plate
The broad-sword's weight,
Both head and heart shall feel.

Wheel the wild dance,
While lightnings glance,
And thunders rattle loud,
And call the brave
To bloody grave,
To sleep without a shroud.

Sons of the spear!
You feel us near,
In many a ghastly dream;
With fancy's eye
Our forms you spy,
And hear our fatal scream.
With clearer sight
Ere falls the night,
Just when to weal or wo
Your disembodied souls take flight
On trembling wing—each startled sprite
Our choir of death shall know.

Wheel the wild dance,
While lightnings glance,
And thunders rattle loud,
And call the brave
To bloody grave,
To sleep without a shroud.

Burst, ye clouds, in tempest showers,
Redder rain shall soon be ours—
See, the east grows wan—
Yield we place to sterner game,
Ere deadlier bolts and drearer flame
Shall the welkin's thunders shame;
Elemental rage is tame
To the wrath of man.

At morn, gray Allan's mates with awe
Heard of the vision'd sights he saw,
The legend heard him say:
But the seer's gifted eye was dim,
Deafened his ear, and stark his limb,
Ere closed that bloody day—
He sleeps far from his highland heath,—
But often of the Dance of Death
His comrades tell the tale
On piquet-post, when ebbs the night,
And waning watch-fires glow less bright,
And dawn is glimmering pale.

FAREWELL TO THE MUSE.

Enchantress, farewell, who so oft has decoy'd me,
At the close of the evening through woodlands to roam,
Where the forester, lated, with wonder espied me
Explore the wild scenes he was quitting for home.
Farewell, and take with thee thy numbers wild speaking,
The language alternate of rapture and wo:
Oh! none but some lover, whose heart-strings are breaking,
The pang that I feel at our parting can know.

Each joy thou couldst double, and when there came sorrow,
Or pale disappointment, to darken my way,

What voice was like thine, that could sing of to-
morrow,
Till forgot in the strain was the grief of to-day!
But when friends drop around us in life's weary
waning,
The grief, queen of numbers, thou canst not as-
suage;
Nor the gradual estrangement of those yet remain-
ing,
The languor of pain, and the chillness of age.

'Twas thou that once taught me, in accents be-
wailing,
To sing how a warrior lay stretched on the plain,
And a maiden hung o'er him with aid unavailing,
And held to his lips the cold goblet in vain;
As vain those enchantments, O queen of wild
numbers,
To a bard when the reign of his fancy is o'er,
And the quick pulse of feeling in apathy slumbers,
Farewell then—Enchantress!—I meet thee no
more.

EPITAPH ON MRS. ERSKINE.

Plain, as her native dignity of mind,
Arise the tomb of her we have resign'd:
Unflaw'd and stainless be the marble scroll,
Emblem of lovely form, and candid soul.—
But, oh! what symbol may avail, to tell
The kindness, wit, and sense, we lov'd so well!
What sculpture show the broken ties of life,
Here buried with the parent, friend, and wife!
Or, on the tablet, stamp each title dear,
By which thine urn, Euphemia, claims the tear!
Yet, taught, by thy meek sufferance, to assume
Patience in anguish, hope beyond the tomb,
Resign'd, though sad, this votive verse shall flow,
And brief, alas! as thy brief span below.

MR. KEMBLE'S FAREWELL ADDRESS,

ON TAKING LEAVE OF THE EDINBURGH STAGE.

As the worn war-horse, at the trumpet's sound,
Erects his mane, and neighs, and paws the ground,
Disdains the ease his generous lord assigns,
And longs to rush on the embattled lines,
So I, your plaudits ringing on mine ear,
Can scarce sustain to think our parting near;
To think my scenic hour for ever past,
And that those valued plaudits are my last.
Why should we part, while still some powers re-
main,
That in your service strive not yet in vain?
Cannot high zeal the strength of youth supply,
And sense of duty fire the fading eye?
And all the wrongs of age remain subdued
Beneath the burning glow of gratitude?
Ah no! the taper, wearing to its close,
Oft for a space in fitful lustre glows;
But all too soon the transient gleam is past,
It cannot be renew'd, and will not last;
Even duty, zeal, and gratitude, can wage
But short-lived conflict with the frosts of age.
Yes! it were poor, remembering what I was,
To live a pensioner on your applause,
To drain the dregs of your endurance dry,
And take, as alms, the praise I once could buy,
Till every sneering youth around inquires,
"Is this the man who once could please our sires?"
And scorn assumes compassion's doubtful mien,
To warn me off from the encumber'd scene.
This must not be;—and higher duties crave
Some space between the theatre and the grave;
That, like the Roman in the capitol,
I may adjust my mantle ere I fall:
My life's brief act in public service flown,
The last, the closing scene, must be my own.
Here, then, adieu! while yet some well-graced
parts
May fix an ancient favourite in your hearts,
Not quite to be forgotten, even when
You look on better actors, younger men:
And if your bosoms own this kindly debt
Of old remembrance, how shall mine forget—
O, how forget!—how oft I hither came
In anxious hope, how oft return'd with fame!
How oft around your circle this weak hand
Has waved immortal Shakspeare's magic wand,
Till the full burst of inspiration came,
And I have felt, and you have fann'd the flame!
By mem'ry treasured, while her reign endures,
Those hours must live—and all their charms are
yours.
O favour'd land! renown'd for arts and arms,
For manly talent and for female charms,
Could this full bosom prompt the sinking line,
What fervent benedictions now were thine!
But my last part is play'd, my knell is rung,
When e'en your praise falls faltering from my
tongue;
And all that you can hear, or I can tell,
Is—friends and patrons, hail, and FARE YOU WELL!

EPILOGUE TO THE APPEAL,

SPOKEN BY MRS. H. SIDDONS.

A cat of yore (or else old Æsop lied)
Was changed into a fair and blooming bride,
But spied a mouse upon her marriage day,
Forgot her spouse and seized upon her prey;
Even thus my bridegroom lawyer, as you saw,
Threw off poor me and pounced upon papa.
His neck from Hymen's mystic knot made loose,
He twisted round my sire's the literal noose.
Such are the fruits of our dramatic labour
Since the new jail became our next door neigh-
bour.*
Yes, times *are* changed, for in your fathers' age
The lawyers were the patrons of the stage;
However high advanced by future fate,
There stands the bench (*points to the pit*) that first
received their weight.
The future legal sage, 'twas ours to see,
Doom though unwigg'd, and plead without a fee.
But now astounding each poor mimic elf,
Instead of lawyers comes the law herself;
Tremendous neighbour, on our right she dwells,
Builds high her towers and excavates her cells;
While on the left, she agitates the town
With the tempestuous question, Up or down?†
'Twixt Scylla and Charybdis thus stand we,
Law's final end and law's uncertainty.
But soft! who lives at Rome the pope must flatter,
And jails and lawsuits are no jesting matter.
Then—just farewell! we wait with serious awe,
Till your applause or censure gives the law,
Trusting our humble efforts may assure ye,
We hold you court and counsel, judge and jury.

* It is necessary to mention, that the allusions in this piece are all local, and addressed only to the Edinburgh audience. The new prisons of the city, on the Calton Hill, are not far from the theatre.

† At this time the public of Edinburgh was much agitated by a lawsuit betwixt the magistrates and many of the inhabitants of the city, concerning the range of new buildings on the western side of the North Bridge; which the latter insisted should be removed as a deformity.

SONG.

Oh, say not, my love, with that mortified air,
That your spring-time of pleasure is flown,
Nor bid me to maids that are younger repair,
For those raptures that still are thine own.

Tho' April his temples may wreathe with the vine,
Its tendrils in infancy curl'd,
'Tis the ardour of August matures us the wine
Whose life-blood enlivens the world.

Tho' thy form, that was fashion'd as light as a fay's,
Has assumed a proportion more round,
And thy glance, that was bright as a falcon's at gaze,
Looks soberly now on the ground,—

Enough, after absence to meet me again,
Thy steps still with ecstasy move;
Enough, that those dear sober glances retain
For me the kind language of love!

THE PALMER.

"O open the door, some pity to show,
Keen blows the northern wind;
The glen is white with the drifted snow,
And the path is hard to find.

"No outlaw seeks your castle gate,
From chasing the king's deer,
Though even an outlaw's wretched state
Might claim compassion here.

"A weary Palmer, worn and weak,
I wander for my sin;
O open, for our lady's sake,
A pilgrim's blessing win!

"I'll give you pardons from the pope,
And relics from o'er the sea,—
Or if for these you will not ope,
Yet open for charity.

"The hare is crouching in her form,
The hart beside the hind:
An aged man, amid the storm,
No shelter can I find.

"You hear the Ettrick's sullen roar,
Dark, deep, and strong is he,
And I must ford the Ettrick o'er,
Unless you pity me.

"The iron gate is bolted hard,
At which I knock in vain;
The owner's heart is closer barred,
Who hears me thus complain.

"Farewell, farewell! and Mary grant,
When old and frail you be,
You never may the shelter want,
That's now denied to me."

The ranger on his couch lay warm,
And heard him plead in vain;
But oft, amid December's storm,
He'll hear that voice again:

For lo, when through the vapours dank,
Morn shone on Ettrick fair,
A corpse amid the alders rank,
The Palmer weltered there.

THE MAID OF NEIDPATH.

There is a tradition in Tweeddale, that when Niedpath castle, near Peebles, was inhabited by the earls of March, a mutual passion subsisted between a daughter of that noble family, and a son of the laird of Tushielaw, in Ettrick forest. As the alliance was thought unsuitable by her parents, the young man went abroad. During his absence, the lady fell into a consumption, and at length, as the only means of saving her life, her father consented that her lover should be recalled. On the day when he was expected to pass through Peebles, on the road to Tushielaw, the young lady, though much exhausted, caused herself to be carried to the balcony of a house in Peebles, belonging to the family, that she might see him as he rode past. Her anxiety and eagerness gave such force to her organs, that she is said to have distinguished his horse's footsteps at an incredible distance. But Tushielaw, unprepared for the change in her appearance, and not expecting to see her in that place, rode on without recognizing her, or even slackening his pace. The lady was unable to support the shock, and, after a short struggle, died in the arms of her attendants. There is an instance similar to this traditional tale in count Hamilton's *Fleur d' Epine.*

O lovers' eyes are sharp to see,
And lovers' ears in hearing;
And love, in life's extremity,
Can lend an hour of cheering.
Disease had been in Mary's bower,
And slow decay from mourning,
Though now she sits on Neidpath's tower,
To watch her love's returning.

All sunk and dim her eyes so bright,
Her form decayed by pining,
Till through her wasted hand, at night,
You saw the taper shining.
By fits, a sultry hectic hue
Across her cheek was flying;
By fits, so ashy pale she grew,
Her maidens thought her dying.

Yet keenest powers to see and hear
Seemed in her frame residing;
Before the watch-dog pricked his ear,
She heard her lover's riding;
Ere scarce a distant form was kenned,
She knew, and waved to greet him;
And o'er the battlement did bend,
As on the wing to meet him.

He came—he passed—an heedless gaze,
As o'er some stranger, glancing;
Her welcome, spoke in faltering phrase,
Lost in his courser's prancing—
The castle arch, whose hollow tone
Returns each whisper spoken,
Could hardly catch the feeble moan,
Which told her heart was broken.

WANDERING WILLIE.

All joy was bereft me the day that you left me,
And climbed the tall vessel to sail yon wide sea;
O weary betide it! I wandered beside it,
And bann'd it for parting my Willie and me.

Far o'er the wave hast thou followed thy fortune,
Oft fought the squadrons of France and of Spain;
Ae kiss of welcome's worth twenty at parting,
Now I hae gotten my Willie again.

When the sky it was mirk, and the winds they were wailing,
I sat on the beach wi' the tear in my e'e,
And thought o' the bark where my Willie was sailing,
And wished that the tempest could a' blaw on me.

Now that thy gallant ship rides at her mooring,
Now that my wanderer's in safety at hame,
Music to me were the wildest winds' roaring,
That e'er o'er Inch-Keith drove the dark ocean faem.

When the lights they did blaze, and the guns they did rattle,
And blith was each heart for the great victory,
In secret I wept for the dangers of battle,
And thy glory itself was scarce comfort to me.

But now shalt thou tell, while I eagerly listen,
Of each bold adventure, and every brave scar,
And, trust me, I'll smile though my e'en they may glisten;
For sweet after danger's the tale of the war.

And oh, how we doubt when there's distance 'tween lovers,
When there's naething to speak to the heart thro' the e'e;
How often the kindest, and warmest, prove rovers,
And the love of the faithfullest ebbs like the sea.

Till, at times, could I help it? I pined and I ponder'd,
If love could change notes like the bird on the tree—
Now I'll ne'er ask if thine eyes may hae wander'd,
Enough, thy leal heart has been constant to me.

Welcome, from sweeping o'er sea and through channel,
Hardships and danger despising for fame,
Furnishing story for glory's bright annal,
Welcome, my wanderer, to Jeanie and hame!

Enough, now thy story in annals of glory
Has humbled the pride of France, Holland, and Spain;
No more shalt thou grieve me, no more shalt thou leave me,
I never will part with my Willie again.

HUNTING-SONG.

Waken, lords and ladies gay,
On the mountain dawns the day,
All the jolly chase is here,
With hawk, and horse, and hunting spear;
Hounds are in their couples yelling,
Hawks are whistling, horns are knelling,
Merrily, merrily, mingle they,
"Waken, lords and ladies gay."

Waken, lords and ladies gay,
The mist has left the mountain gray,
Springlets in the dawn are steaming,
Diamonds on the brake are gleaming;
And foresters have busy been,
To track the buck in thicket green;
Now we come to chant our lay,
"Waken, lords and ladies gay."

Waken, lords and ladies gay,
To the green-wood haste away,
We can show you where he lies,
Fleet of foot, and tall of size;
We can show the marks he made,
When 'gainst the oak his antlers frayed;
You shall see him brought to bay,
"Waken, lords and ladies gay."

Louder, louder chant the lay,
Waken, lords and ladies gay!
Tell them youth, and mirth, and glee,
Run a course as well as we:
Time, stern huntsman! who can balk,
Stanch as hound, and fleet as hawk:
Think of this, and rise with day,
Gentle lords and ladies gay.

THE VIOLET.

The violet in her green-wood bower,
Where birchen boughs with hazles mingle,
May boast itself the fairest flower
In glen, or copse, or forest dingle.

Though fair her gems of azure hue,
Beneath the dew drop's weight reclining,
I've seen an eye of lovelier blue,
More sweet through wat'ry lustre shining.

The summer sun that dew shall dry,
Ere yet the day be past its morrow;
Nor longer in my false love's eye,
Remained the tear of parting sorrow.

TO A LADY,

WITH FLOWERS FROM A ROMAN WALL.

Take these flowers, which, purple waving,
On the ruined rampart grew,
Where, the sons of freedom braving,
Rome's imperial standards flew.

Warriors from the breach of danger
Pluck no longer laurels there:
They but yield the passing stranger
Wild-flower wreaths for Beauty's hair.

THE BARD'S INCANTATION.

WRITTEN UNDER THE THREAT OF INVASION, IN THE AUTUMN OF 1804.

The forest of Glenmore is drear,
It is all of black pine, and the dark oak-tree;
And the midnight wind, to the mountain deer,
Is whistling the forest lullaby:
The moon looks through the drifting storm,
But the troubled lake reflects not her form,
For the waves roll whitening to the land,
And dash against the shelvy strand.

There is a voice among the trees
That mingles with the groaning oak—
That mingles with the stormy breeze,
And the lake-waves dashing against the rock;
There is a voice within the wood,
The voice of the bard in fitful mood;
His song was louder than the blast,
As the bard of Glenmore through the forest past.

"Wake ye from your sleep of death,
Minstrels and bards of other days!
For the midnight wind is on the heath,
And the midnight meteors dimly blaze:
The spectre with his bloody hand,*
Is wandering through the wild woodland;
The owl and the raven are mute for dread,
And the time is meet to awake the dead!

"Souls of the mighty, wake and say,
To what high strain your harps were strung,
When Lochlin ploughed her billowy way,
And on your shores her Norsemen flung?
Her Norsemen trained to spoil and blood,
Skilled to prepare the Raven's food,
All, by your harpings doomed to die
On bloody Largs and Loncarty.†

"Mute are ye all: No murmurs strange
Upon the midnight breeze sail by;

* The forest of Glenmore is haunted by a spirit called Lhamdearg, or Red-hand.

† Where the Norwegian invader of Scotland received two bloody defeats.

Nor through the pines with whistling change,
Mimic the harp's wild harmony!
Mute are ye now?—Ye ne'er were mute,
When Murder with his bloody foot,
And Rapine with his iron hand,
Were hovering near yon mountain strand.

"O yet awake the strain to tell,
By every deed in song enrolled,
By every chief who fought or fell,
For Albion's weal in battle bold;—
From Coilgach,* first who rolled his ear,
Through the deep ranks of Roman war,
To him, of veteran memory dear,
Who victor died on Aboukir.

"By all their swords, by all their scars,
By all their names, a mighty spell!
By all their wounds, by all their wars,
Arise, the mighty strain to tell!
For fiercer than fierce Hengist's strain,
More impious than the heathen Dane,
More grasping than all-grasping Rome,
Gaul's ravening legions hither come!"—
The wind is hushed, and still the lake—
Strange murmurs fill my tingling ears,
Bristles my hair, my sinews quake,
At the dread voice of other years—
"When targets clashed, and bugles rung,
And blades round warriors' heads were flung,
The foremost of the band were we,
And hymn'd the joys of Liberty!"

THE RESOLVE.

IN IMITATION OF AN OLD ENGLISH POEM.—1809.

My wayward fate I needs must plain,
Though bootless be the theme;
I loved, and was beloved again,
Yet all was but a dream:
For, as her love was quickly got,
So it was quickly gone;
No more I'll bask in flame so hot,
But coldly dwell alone.

Not maid more bright than maid was e'er
My fancy shall beguile,
By flattering word, or feigned fear,
By gesture, look, or smile:
No more I'll call the shaft fair shot,
Till it has fairly flown,
Nor scorch me at a flame so hot;—
I'll rather freeze alone.

Each ambushed Cupid I'll defy,
In cheek, or chin, or brow,
And deem the glance of woman's eye
As weak as woman's vow:
I'll lightly hold the lady's heart,
That is but lightly won;
I'll steel my breast to beauty's art,
And learn to live alone.

The flaunting torch soon blazes out,
The diamond's ray abides,
The flame its glory hurls about,
The gem its lustre hides;
Such gem I fondly deemed was mine,
And glowed a diamond stone,
But, since each eye may see it shine,
I'll darkling dwell alone.

No waking dream shall tinge my thought
With dies so bright and vain,
No silken net, so slightly wrought,
Shall tangle me again:
No more I'll pay so dear for wit,
I'll live upon mine own;
Nor shall wild passion trouble it,—
I'll rather dwell alone.

And thus I'll hush my heart to rest,—
"Thy loving labours lost;
Thou shalt no more be wildly blest,
To be so strangely crost;
The widowed turtles mateless die,
The phœnix is but one;
They seek no loves—no more will I—
I'll rather dwell alone."

* The Galgacus of Tacitus.

EPITAPH

DESIGNED FOR A MONUMENT IN LICHFIELD CATHEDRAL,

At the Burial Place of the family of Miss Seward.

Amid these aisles, where once his precepts showed
The heavenward path-way which in life he trod,
This simple tablet marks a father's bier,
And those he loved in life, in death are near;
For him, for them, a daughter bade it rise,
Memorial of domestic charities.

Still wouldst thou know why, o'er the marble spread,
In female grace the willow droops her head;
Why on her branches, silent and unstrung,
The minstrel harp is emblematic hung;
What poet's voice is smothered here in dust,
Till waked to join the chorus of the just,——
Lo! one brief line an answer sad supplies,
Honoured, beloved, and mourned, here Seward lies!
Her worth, her warmth of heart, let friendship say,—
Go seek her genius in her living lay.

THE RETURN TO ULSTER.

Once again, but how changed since my wanderings began—
I have heard the deep voice of the Lagan and Bann.
And the pines of Cambrassil resound to the roar,
That wearies the echoes of fair Tullamore.
Alas! my poor bosom, and why shouldst thou burn?
With the scenes of my youth can its raptures return?
Can I live the dear life of delusion again,
That flow'd when these echoes first mixed with my strain?

It was then that around me, though poor and unknown,
High spells of mysterious enchantment were thrown;
The streams were of silver, of diamond the dew,
The land was an Eden, for fancy was new.
I had heard of our bards, and my soul was on fire
At the rush of their verse and the sweep of their lyre;
To me 'twas not legend, nor tale to the ear,
But a vision of noontide, distinguished and clear.

Ultonia's old heroes awoke at the call,
And renewed the wild pomp of the chase and the hall;
And the standard of Fion flashed fierce from on high,
Like a burst of the sun when the tempest is nigh.*

* In ancient Irish poetry, the standard of Fion, or Fingal, is called the *Sun-burst*, an epithet feebly rendered by the *Sun-beam* of Macpherson.

It seemed that the harp of green Erin once more
Could renew all the glories she boasted of yore.—
Yet why at remembrance, fond heart, should'st
thou burn?
They were days of delusion, and cannot return.
But was she, too, a phantom, the maid who stood
by,
And listed my lay, while she turned from mine eye?
Was she, too, a vision, just glancing to view,
Then dispersed in the sunbeam or melted to dew?
Oh! would it had been so!—O! would that her eye
Had been but a star-glance that shot through the
sky,
And her voice, that was moulded to melody's
thrill,
Had been but a zephyr that sighed and was still!
Oh! would it had been so!—not then his poor
heart
Had learned the sad lesson, to love and to part;
To bear, unassisted, its burthen of care,
While I toiled for the wealth I had no one to share.
Not then had I said, when life's summer was done,
And the hours of her autumn were fast speeding
on,
"Take the fame and the riches ye brought in your
train,
And restore me the dream of my spring tide again!"

ON THE MASSACRE OF GLENCOE.

"O TELL me, harper, wherefore flow
Thy wayward notes of wail and wo
Far down the desert of Glencoe,
Where none may list their melody?
Say, harp'st thou to the mists that fly,
Or to the dun deer glancing by,
Or to the eagle that from high
Screams chorus to thy minstrelsy?"

"No, not to these, for they have rest,—
The mist-wreath has the mountain-crest,
The stag his lair, the erne her nest,
Abode of lone security.
But those for whom I pour the lay,
Not wild wood deep, nor mountain gray,
Not this deep dell that shrouds from day,
Could screen from treacherous cruelty.

"Their flag was furled, and mute their drum,
The very household dogs were dum,
Unwont to bay at guests that come
In guise of hospitality.
His blithest notes the piper plied,
Her gayest snood the maiden tied,
The dame her distaff flung aside,
To tend her kindly housewifery.

"The hand that mingled in the meal,
At midnight drew the felon steel,
And gave the host's kind breast to feel
Meed for his hospitality!
The friendly hearth which warmed that hand,
At midnight armed it with the brand,
That bade destruction's flames expand
Their red and fearful blazonry.

"Then woman's shriek was heard in vain,
Nor infancy's unpitied plain,
More than the warrior's groan, could gain
Respite from ruthless butchery!
The winter wind that whistled shrill,
The snows that night that choaked the hill,
Though wild and pitiless, had still
Far more than southron clemency.

"Long have my harp's best notes been gone,
Few are its strings, and faint their tone,
They can but sound in desert lone
Their gray-haired master's misery.
Were each gray hair a minstrel string,
Each chord should imprecations fling,
Till startled Scotland loud should ring,
'Revenge for blood and treachery!'"

PROLOGUE

TO MISS BAILLIE'S PLAY OF THE FAMILY LEGEND.

'Tis sweet to hear expiring summer's sigh,
Through forests tinged with russet, wail and die;
'Tis sweet and sad the latest notes to hear
Of distant musie, dying on the ear;
But far more sadly sweet, on foreign strand,
We list the legends of our native land,
Linked as they come with every tender tie,
Memorials dear of youth and infancy.

Chief, thy wild tales, romantic Caledon,
Wake keen remembrance in each hardy son.
Whether on India's burning coasts he toil,
Or till Arcadia's* winter-fettered soil,
He hears with throbbing heart and moistened eyes,
And as he hears, what dear illusions rise!
It opens on his soul his native dell,
The woods wild waving, and the water's swell;
Tradition's theme, the tower that threats the plain,
The mossy cairn that hides the hero slain;
The cot beneath whose simple porch were told,
By gray-haired patriarch, the tales of old,
The infant group that hushed their sports the while,
And the dear maid who listened with a smile.
The wanderer, while the vision warms his brain,
Is denizen of Scotland once again.

Are such keen feelings to the crowd confined,
And sleep they in the poet's gifted mind?
Oh no! for she, within whose mighty page
Each tyrant passion shows his wo and rage,
Has felt the wizard influence they inspire,
And to your own traditions tuned her lyre.
Yourselves shall judge—whoe'er has raised the sail
By Mull's dark coast has heard this evening's tale.
The plaided boatman, resting on his oar,
Points to the fatal rock amid the roar
Of whitening waves, and tells whate'er to-night
Our humble stage shall offer to your sight;
Proudly preferred that first our efforts give
Scenes glowing from her pen to breathe and live;
More proudly yet, should Caledon approve
The filial token of a daughter's love!

FAREWELL TO MACKENZIE,

HIGH CHIEF OF KINTAIL.

FROM THE GAELIC.

THE original verses are arranged to a beautiful Gaelic air, of which the chorus is adapted to the double pull upon the oars of a galley, and which is therefore distinct from the ordinary jorams, or boat-songs. They were composed by the family bard upon the departure of the earl of Seaforth, who was obliged to take refuge in Spain, after an unsuccessful effort at insurrection in favour of the Stuart family, in the year 1718.

FAREWELL to Mackenneth, great earl of the North,
The lord of Lochearron, Glenshiel, and Seaforth;

* Arcadia, or Nova Scotia.

To the chieftain this morning his course who began,
Lanching forth on the billows his bark like a swan.
For a far foreign land he has hoisted his sail,
Farewell to Mackenzie, high chief of Kintail!

O swift be the galley, and hardy her crew,
May her captain be skilful, her mariners true,
In danger undaunted, unwearied by toil,
Though the whirlwind should rise, and the ocean should boil:
On the brave vessel's gunnel I drank his bonnail,*
And farewell to Mackenzie, high chief of Kintail!

Awake in thy chamber, thou sweet southland gale!
Like the sighs of his people, breathe soft on his sail;
Be prolonged as regret that his vassals must know,
Be fair as their faith, and sincere as their wo:
Be so soft, and so fair, and so faithful, sweet gale,
Wafting onward Mackenzie, high chief of Kintail!

Be his pilot experienced, and trusty, and wise,
To measure the seas and to study the skies:
May he hoist all his canvass from streamer to deck,
But O! crowd it higher when wafting him back—
Till the cliffs of Skooroora, and Conan's glad vale,
Shall welcome Mackenzie, high chief of Kintail!

IMITATION
OF THE PRECEDING SONG.

So sung the old bard, in the grief of his heart,
When he saw his loved lord from his people depart,
Now mute on thy mountains, O Albyn, are heard
Nor the voice of the song, nor the harp of the bard;
Or its strings are but waked by the stern winter gale,
As they mourn for Mackenzie, last chief of Kintail.

From the far southland border a minstrel came forth,
And he waited the hour that some bard of the north
His hand on the harp of the ancient should east,
And bid its wild numbers mix high with the blast;
But no bard was there left in the land of the Gael,
To lament for Mackenzie, last chief of Kintail.

And shalt thou then sleep, did the minstrel exclaim,
Like the son of the lowly, unnoticed by fame?
No, son of Fitzgerald! in accents of wo,
The song thou hast loved o'er thy coffin shall flow,
And teach thy wild mountains to join in the wail,
That laments for Mackenzie, last chief of Kintail.

In vain, the bright course of thy talents to wrong,
Fate deadened thine ear and imprisoned thy tongue;
For brighter o'er all her obstructions arose
The glow of the genius they could not oppose;
And who in the land of the Saxon or Gael,
Might match with Mackenzie, high chief of Kintail?

Thy sons rose around thee in light and in love,
All a father could hope, all a friend could approve;
What 'vails it the tale of thy sorrows to tell—
In the spring-time of youth and of promise they fell!
Of the line of Fitzgerald remains not a male,
To bear the proud name of the chief of Kintail.

And thou, gentle dame, who must bear to thy grief,
For thy clan and thy country, the cares of a chief,
Whom brief rolling moons in six changes have left,
Of thy husband, and father, and brethren bereft,
To thine ear of affection how sad is the hail,
That salutes thee the heir of the line of Kintail!

* Bonail', or Bonallez, the old Scottish phrase for a feast at parting with a friend.

WAR-SONG OF LACHLAN,
HIGH CHIEF OF MACLEAN.
FROM THE GAELIC.

This song appears to be imperfect, or at least, like many of the early Gaelic poems, makes a rapid transition from one subject to another; from the situation, namely, of one of the daughters of the clan, who opens the song by lamenting the absence of her lover, to an eulogium over the military glories of the chieftaian. The translator has endeavoured to imitate the abrupt style of the original.

A WEARY month has wandered o'er
Since last we parted on the shore;
Heaven! that I saw thee, Love, once more,
Safe on that shore again!—
'Twas valiant Lachlan gave the word:
Lachlan, of many a galley lord:
He called his kindred bands on board,
And lanched them on the main.

Clan-Gillian* is to ocean gone;
Clan-Gillian, fierce in foray known;
Rejoicing in the glory won
In many a bloody broil:
For wide is heard the thundering fray,
The rout, the ruin, the dismay,
When from the twilight glens away
Clan-Gillian drives the spoil.

Wo to the hills that shall rebound
Our bannered bagpipes' maddening sound;
Clan-Gillian's onset echoing round,
Shall shake their inmost cell.
Wo to the bark whose crew shall gaze,
Where Lachlan's silken streamer plays;
The fools might face the lightning's blaze
As wisely and as well!

* *i. e.* The clan of Maclean, literally the race of Gillian.

SAINT CLOUD.

SOFT spread the southern Summer night
Her veil of darkness blue;
Ten thousand stars combined to light
The terrace of saint Cloud.

The evening breezes gently sighed,
Like breath of lover true,
Bewailing the deserted pride
And wreck of sweet saint Cloud.

The drum's deep roll was heard afar,
The bugle wildly blew
Good night to Hulan and Husar,
That garrison saint Cloud.

The startled Naiads from the shade
With broken arms withdrew,
And silenced was that proud cascade,
The glory of saint Cloud.

We sate upon its steps of stone,
Nor could its silence rue,
When waked, to music of our own,
The echoes of saint Cloud.

Slow Seine might hear each lovely note
Fall light as summer-dew,
While through the moonless air they float,
Prolonged from fair saint Cloud.

And sure a melody more sweet
His waters never knew,
Though musie's self was wont to meet
With princes at saint Cloud.

Nor then, with more delighted ear,
The circle round her drew,
Than ours, when gathered round to hear
Our songstress at saint Cloud.

Few happy hours poor mortals pass,—
Then give those hours their due,
And rank among the foremost class
Our evenings at saint Cloud.

Paris, Sept. 5, 1815.

ROMANCE OF DUNOIS.

FROM THE FRENCH.

The original of this little Romance makes part of a manuscript collection of French songs, probably compiled by some young officer, which was found on the field of Waterloo, so much stained with clay and blood, as sufficiently to indicate what had been the fate of its late owner. The song is popular in France, and is rather a good specimen of the style of composition to which it belongs. The translation is strictly literal.

It was Dunois, the young and brave,
Was bound for Palestine,
But first he made his orisons
Before saint Mary's shrine:
"And grant, immortal queen of heaven,"
Was still the soldier's prayer,
"That I may prove the bravest knight,
And love the fairest fair."

His oath of honour on the shrine
He graved it with his sword,
And followed to the holy land
The banner of his lord;
Where, faithful to his noble vow,
His war-cry filled the air,
"Be honoured aye the bravest knight,
Beloved the fairest fair."

They owed the conquest to his arm,
And then his liege-lord said,
"The heart that has for honour beat,
By bliss must be repaid,—
My daughter Isabel and thou
Shall be a wedded pair,
For thou art bravest of the brave,
She fairest of the fair."

And then they bound the holy knot
Before saint Mary's shrine,
That makes a paradise on earth,
If hearts and hands combine:
And every lord and lady bright
That were in chapel there,
Cried, "Honoured be the bravest knight,
Beloved the fairest fair!"

THE TROUBADOUR.

Glowing with love, on fire for fame,
A Troubadour that hated sorrow,
Beneath his lady's window came,
And thus he sung his last good-morrow:
"My arm it is my country's right,
My heart is in my true love's bower;
Gayly for love and fame to fight
Befits the gallant Troubadour."

And while he marched with helm on head
And harp in hand, the descant rung,
As faithful to his favourite maid,
The minstrel-burthen still he sung:
"My arm it is my country's right,
My heart is in my lady's bower;
Resolved for love and fame to fight,
I come, a gallant Troubadour."

Even when the battle-roar was deep,
With dauntless heart he hew'd his way
Mid splintering lance and falchion-sweep,
And still was heard his warrior-lay;
"My life it is my country's right,
My heart is in my lady's bower;
For love to die, for fame to fight,
Becomes the valiant Troubadour."

Alas! upon the bloody field
He fell beneath the foeman's glaive,
But still, reclining on his shield,
Expiring sung the exulting stave:
"My life it is my country's right,
My heart is in my lady's bower;
For love and fame to fall in fight,
Becomes the valiant Troubadour."

FROM THE FRENCH.

It chanced that Cupid on a season,
By Fancy urged, resolved to wed,
But could not settle whether Reason
Or Folly should partake his bed.

What does he then?—upon my life,
'Twas bad example for a deity—
He takes me Reason for his wife,
And Folly for his hours of gayety.

Though thus he dealt in petty treason,
He loved them both in equal measure;
Fidelity was born of Reason,
And Folly brought to bed of Pleasure.

SONG,

FOR THE ANNIVERSARY MEETING OF THE PITT CLUB OF SCOTLAND.

O dread was the time, and more dreadful the omen,
When the brave on Marengo lay slaughtered in vain,
And, beholding broad Europe bowed down by her foemen,
Pitt closed in his anguish the map of her reign!
Not the fate of broad Europe could bend his brave spirit,
To take for his country the safety of shame;
O then in her triumph remember his merit,
And hallow the goblet that flows to his name.

Round the husbandman's head, while he traces the furrow,
The mists of the winter may mingle with rain,
He may plough it with labour, and sow it in sorrow,
And sigh while he fears he has sowed it in vain;
He may die ere his children shall reap in their gladness,
But the blith harvest-home shall remember his claim,
And their jubilee-shout shall be softened with sadness,
While they hallow the goblet that flows to his name.

Tho' anxious and timeless his life was expended,
In toils for our country preserved by his care,
Tho' he died ere one ray o'er the nations ascended,
To light the long darkness of doubt and despair;

The storms he endured in our Britain's December,
The perils his wisdom foresaw and o'ercame,
In her glory's rich harvest shall Britain remember,
And hallow the goblet that flows to his name.

Nor forget his gray head, who, all dark in affliction,
Is deaf to the tale of our victories won,
And to sounds the most dear to paternal affection,
The shout of his people applauding his son;
By his firmness unmoved in success or disaster,
By his long reign of virtue, remember his claim!
With our tribute to PITT join the praise of his master,
Though a tear stain the goblet that flows to his name.

Yet again fill the wine-cup, and change the sad measure
The rites of our grief and our gratitude paid,
To our prince, to our heroes, devote the bright treasure,
The wisdom that planned, and the zeal that obeyed!
Fill WELLINGTON'S cup till it beam like his glory,
Forget not our own brave DALHOUSIE and GRÆME;
A thousand years hence hearts shall bound at their story,
And hallow the goblet that flows to their fame.

SONG,

ON THE LIFTING OF THE BANNER OF THE HOUSE OF BUCCLEUGH,

At a great Foot-ball Match on Carterhaugh.

FROM the brown crest of Newark its summons extending,
Our signal is waving in smoke and in flame;
And each forester blith, from his mountain descending,
Bounds light o'er the heather to join in the game.

CHORUS.

Then up with the banner, let forest winds fan her,
She has blazed over Ettrick eight ages and more;
In sport we'll attend her, in battle defend her,
With heart and with hand, like our fathers before.

When the southern invader spread waste and disorder,
At the glance of her ereseents he paused and withdrew,
For around them were marshalled the pride of the border,
The flowers of the forest, the bands of BUCCLEUGH.
Then up with the banner, &c.

A stripling's weak hand to our revel has borne her,
No mail-glove has grasp'd her, no spearmen surround;
But ere a bold foeman should scathe or should scorn her,
A thousand true hearts would be cold on the ground.
Then up with the banner, &c.

We forget each contention of civil dissention,
And hail, like our brethren, HOME, DOUGLAS, and CAR;
And ELLIOT and PRINGLE in pastime shall mingle,
As welcome in peace as their fathers in war.
Then up with the banner, &c.

Then strip, lads, and to it, though sharp be the weather,
And if, by mischance, you should happen to fall,
There are worse things in life than a tumble on heather,
And life is itself but a game at foot-ball.
Then up with the banner, &c.

And when it is over, we'll drink a blith measure
To each laird and each lady that witnessed our fun,
And to every blith heart that took part in our pleasure,
To the lads that have lost and the lads that have won.
Then up with the banner, &c.

May the forest still flourish, both borough and landward,
From the hall of the peer to the herd's inglenook;
And huzza! my brave hearts, for BUCCLEUGH and his standard,
For the king and the country, the clan and the duke!

Then up with the banner, let forest winds fan her,
She has blazed over Ettrick eight ages and more;
In sport we'll attend her, in battle defend her,
With heart and with hand, like our fathers before.

CARLE, NOW THE KING'S COME.*

BEING NEW WORDS TO AN AULD SPRING.

THE news has flown frae mouth to mouth,
The north for anes has bang'd the south;
The de'il a Scotsman's die of drouth,
Carle, now the king's come.

CHORUS.

Carle, now the king's come!
Carle, now the king's come!
Thou shalt dance and I will sing,
Carle, now the king's come!

Auld England held him lang and fast;
And Ireland had a joyfu' cast;
But Scotland's turn has come at last—
Carle, now the king's come!

Auld Reikie, in her rokela gray
Thought never to have seen the day;
He's been a weary time away—
But, *Carle, now the king's come!*

She's skirling frae the Castle Hill
The carline's voice is grown sae shrill
Ye'll hear her at the Canon Mill,
Carle, now the king's come!

"Up, bairns," she cries, "baith great and sma'
And busk ye for the weapon shaw!—
Stand by me and we'll hang them a'!
Carle, now the king's come!

"Come, from Newbattle's† ancient spires,
Bauld Lothian, with your knights and squires,
And mateh the mettle of your sires,
Carle, now the king's come!

"You're welcome hame, my Montague!‡
Bring in your hand the young Buccleugh;—
I'm missing some that I may rue,
Carle, now the king's come!

"Come Haddington, the kind and gay,
You've grac'd my causeway mony a day;
I'll weep the cause if you should stay,
Carle, now the king's come!

* Composed on the occasion of the royal visit to Scotland, in August, 1822.—*Am. Pub.*
† Seat of the marquis of Lothian.
‡ Uncle to the duke of Buccleugh.

"Come, premier duke,* and carry doun,
Frae yonder craig† his ancient croun;
It's had a lang sleep and a soun'—
But, *Carle, now the king's come!*

"Come, Athole, from the hill and wood,
Bring down your clansmen like a cloud;—
Come, Morton, show the Douglass blood,—
Carle, now the king's come!

"Come, Tweeddale, true as sword to sheath;
Come, Hopetoun, fear'd on fields of death;
Come, Clerk, and give your bugle breath;
Carle, now the king's come!

"Come, Wemyss, who modest merit aids;
Come, Roseberry, from Dalmeny shades;
Breadalbane, bring your belted plaids;
Carle, now the king's come!

"Come, stately Niddrie‡ auld and true
Girt with the sword that Minden knew;
We have ower few such lairds as you—
Carle, now the king's come!

"King Arthur's grown a common crier,
He's head in Fife and far Cantire,—
'Fie, lads, behold my crest of fire!'§
Carle, now the king's come!

"Saint Abb roars out, 'I see him pass
Between Tantallon and the Bass!'—
Calton,‖ get on your keeking-glass,
Carle, now the king's come!"

* Hamilton. † The castle.
‡ Wauchope of Niddrie, a noble looking old man, and a fine specimen of an ancient baron.
§ There is to be a bonfire on the top of Arthur's seat.
‖ The Castle-hill commands the finest view of the Frith of Forth, and will be covered with thousands, anxiously looking for the royal squadron.

The Carline stopp'd; and sure I am,
For very glee had ta'en a dwam,
But Oman help'd her to a dram.—
Cogie, now the king's come!

Cogie, now the king's come!
Cogie, now the king's come!
I'se be four, and ye's be toom,
Cogie, now the king's come!

IMPROMPTU.

TO MONSIEUR ALEXANDRE.

Of yore, in old England, it was not thought good
To carry two visages under one hood;
What should folks say to you, who have faces such plenty,
That from under one hood you last night show'd us twenty?
Stand forth, arch deceiver! and tell us, in truth,
Are you handsome or ugly? in age, or in youth?
Man, woman, or child? or a dog, or a mouse?
Or are you, at once, each live thing in the house?
Each live thing did I ask? each dead implement too!
A work-shop in your person—saw, chisel, and screw?
Above all, are you one individual? I know
You must be, at the least, *Alexandre and Co.*
But I think you're a troop—an assemblage—a mob—
And that I, as the sheriff, must take up the job,
And, instead of rehearsing your wonders in verse,
Must read you the riot-act, and bid you disperse!
Abbotsford, 23d April, 1824.

THE END.

UNIV C

14 DAY USE
RETURN TO DESK FROM WHICH BORROWED

LOAN DEPT.

This book is due on the last date stamped below, or
on the date to which renewed.
Renewed books are subject to immediate recall.

REC'D LD
JAN 15'64-2 PM
11 Apr'64 RW
REC'D LD
APR 14 6[illegible] PM
SENT ON ILL
MAR 10 1995
U. C. BERKELEY

LD 21A–40m-4,'63
(D6471s10)476B

General Library
University of California
Berkeley

U.C. BERKELEY LIBRARIES
C022642680

287549
950
1930

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA LIBRARY